Program Evaluation
07.642
Online Course
Summer 2009

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Office Hour (online chat):
Tuesday 5:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. EDT

Course Objectives:
By the end of the semester, you should be able to:
1) Identify and discuss several models of program evaluation.
2) Understand what needs to be considered and addressed in a needs assessment.
3) Be able to identify an appropriate design for an evaluation.
4) Complete tasks important in creating an evaluation plan.
5) Become comfortable presenting ideas and plans to stakeholders.
6) Understand how evaluation results can be useful for program decision making.

Textbooks:

The 2002 User Friendly Handbook for Project Evaluation. (2002). The National Science Foundation. This book may be obtained for FREE!! by logging onto www.nsf.gov. There is a section called publications. You can use the document number (nsfo2057) to order a copy. Do this today.

Class format and tone:
The class, like good program evaluation, is dependent upon collaboration among the stakeholders (you), the program director (me) and the evaluators (us). You will be asked to lead online discussions, contribute to discussions, and create and post materials for presentation. Although I hope to teach you many things about evaluation, you are ultimately responsible for what you learn in the class. So come online ready to contribute and learn! I will be available every week during my chat time from 5 to 6 pm EDT on Tuesdays. If you can not make this time, but would like to chat with me either online or on the phone, please email me and let me know! The new week will begin on Fridays at 5:00, with the exception of the first week, which begins on Tuesday. You will have until the following Friday at 5:00 to post responses to discussion questions.

The central tenets of our conceptual framework, Education for Transformation, at the Graduate School of Education at UMass Lowell are Excellence, Equity, Inquiry and Collaboration. In this class we will strive to create an online environment in which those
values are essential. Our collaborative learning environment will center around the inquiry and equity of the students in the class, as well as respect for equity and the use of inquiry as we work with programs to help create evaluation plans outside of class. Your work both in the classroom and with program directors and/or stakeholders for the programs you will be working with is expected to reflect your desire for educational excellence.

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<th>Schedule</th>
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<td><strong>Week</strong></td>
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<td>May 26 – May 29</td>
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| May 29 – June 5 | Planning an evaluation | Chapter 2  
NSF pp 1 – 13 |
| June 5 – 12 | Criteria, standards & measures  
*June 12 is the last day to receive approval of program.* | Chapters 3 & 4  
NSF pp 15 - 31 |
| June 12 – 19 | Ethics & Needs assessments | Chapters 5 & 6  
NSF 63 - 73 |
| June 19 – 26 | Program Monitoring | Chapter 7 |
| June 26 – July 3 | Single Group Designs; Quasi-Experimental Approaches  
*Assessment Paper DUE June 26 11:59 p.m. EDT* | Chapters 9 & 10 |
| July 3 – July 10 | Conducting Research while Evaluating; Qualitative Methods | Chapters 8 & 11  
NSF pp 43 – 62 |
| July 10 – 17 | Cost Analyses & Evaluation Reports | Chapters 12 & 13  
NSF pp 31 - 42 |
| July 17 – 24 | Encouraging Utilization  
*Final Presentations/Evaluation Plans Due July 17 5:00 p.m. EDT* | Chapter 14 |
| July 24 – July 31 | **FINAL EXAM** | |

**NOTE:** Other readings may be assigned as the semester progresses.

*Evaluation of learning:*  
Your grade will be determined based on the following scores:  
22% Program Assessment Paper  
10% Discussion Leading
30% Evaluation Plan (Presentation materials, Executive Summary, Budget, Timeline, References)
15% Class participation in Discussion Sessions
2% Participation in a Chat session
21% Final Exam
Course Requirements:

1) **Online discussion leader.** You will collaborate online with one or two other students to create 2 or 3 discussion questions one week. You will each be expected to lead the discussion for one question that your group posts. This means that you must carefully read all responses to “your” question and respond appropriately to the comments and questions your classmates post. You will be required to post your discussion questions by 5:00 pm on Friday of the week you are assigned. You should plan to get my approval for your discussion ideas by the Friday before your assigned discussion leading week (unless you choose week 2!). You will be asked to complete an additional reading on your discussion topic, so that you can contribute additional knowledge to the discussion.

2) **Class participation in Discussion Sessions.** In addition to coming to each discussion and chat prepared to discuss the readings, you will be expected to contribute at least two ideas or comments on others’ ideas each week. Your comments/ideas must be relevant to the topic of the week and indicate that you did complete the readings and/or assignments for the week. See the document entitled Class Discussions and Chats in the Course Resources folder for more detailed information about the grading scheme for discussion participation.

3) **Final exam.** The exam will be comprehensive, and it will include essay and a few short answer questions. It will be posted by midnight EDT July 24 and must be completed by **July 31 noon** (12:00 p.m.) EDT.

4) **Program Assessment Paper & Evaluation Plan.** You will be required to find a program to work with this semester in order to create an evaluation plan. This may be a program that you are currently working with, or it may be a new program to you. You need to get approval from me by June 14 and you must meet with the program director prior to June 21. You will need to meet with the program director a few times during the summer. You will ultimately give them a copy of your evaluation plan and/or present to them your findings.

The papers that you turn in must be in 12 point Times New Roman or Courier font.

The program assessment paper must be no more than 10 double spaced pages, including any figures and graphs. The topics covered must include program issues, needs, missions, stakeholders, design and implementation. The title page, references and any appendices do not need to be included in the page count. You will also need to include any assessments of any evaluation that has already been done or is being done for the program. A 150 word executive summary should precede the paper (it does not need to be considered in the page limit).

The evaluation plan must include evaluation questions and hypotheses, the design and criteria, the analysis plan (including a schedule), a budget and plan for dissemination of results. Your plan must be based on a literature review and material covered in class. You will be required to post a presentation of the plan with the stakeholders as the presumed audience. You will also turn in an executive summary of the plan which may be no more than 7 double spaced pages, plus a budget, timeline and a list of references.

Grading Scale
The overall grading system for the course is based on the system below. Please note that the UMass system now uses the A+ to B system for graduate standard work.

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<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>GPA</th>
<th>Point structure</th>
<th>Comment</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A+</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>99-100</td>
<td>Work of the highest professional standard demonstrating independent and exemplary performance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>96-98</td>
<td>Excellent work demonstrating independent and high quality performance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>91-95</td>
<td>Very good work, carefully executed, but requiring some areas of improvement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>86-90</td>
<td>Good work, indicating careful thought and attention to the task, yet requiring several areas of improvement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>80-85</td>
<td>Work of graduate standard, but omissions exist or careful analysis is not in evidence.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Below Graduate Standard</td>
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<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>76-79</td>
<td>Effort is evident, but work indicates lack of understanding of the demands of the task.</td>
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<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>70-75</td>
<td>Poor quality work with little attention to detail and the demands of the task.</td>
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<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>65-69</td>
<td>Work of very poor quality, indicating no understanding of the depth of analysis required.</td>
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<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>Below 65</td>
<td>Serious neglect or evidence of cheating.</td>
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Academic misconduct will NOT be tolerated. Be sure to read the posted document in the Course Resource folder on the university’s policies on academic misconduct carefully.