

PUBP 713-002 — Policy and Program Evaluation

SYLLABUS

Credit Hours:	3
Date/Time:	Monday 7:20 pm – 10:00 pm
Classroom:	Arlington Campus, Original Building 268
Website:	http://courses.gmu.edu
Instructor:	Katrin B. Anacker, Ph.D.
Office:	Arlington Campus, Original Building 224
e-mail:	kanacker@gmu.edu
Office Hours:	Monday 6:15 pm – 7:15 pm Tuesday 6:15 pm – 7:15 pm or by appointment (kanacker@gmu.edu)

Course Description

This course introduces students to policy and program evaluation. Topics include tailoring evaluations; identifying issues and formulating questions; assessing the need for a program; expressing and assessing program theory; assessing and monitoring program process; measuring and monitoring program outcomes; assessing program impacts; detecting, interpreting, and analyzing program effects; and measuring efficiency. The course provides students with an opportunity to collaborate with the following local non-profit organizations:

- Capital Area Asset Builders <http://www.caab.org/>
Emily Appel, Director Savings Program, eappel@caab.org
- DC Quality Trust <http://www.dcqualitytrust.org/>
Tina Campanella, Executive Director, TINA818@aol.com
- Martha's Table <http://www.marthastable.org/>
Dominick Musso, Director of Facilities and Food, dmusso@marthastable.org
- Mary's Center <http://www.maryscenter.org/>
Joan Yengo, Vice President for Programs, JYengo@maryscenter.org
- National Community Reinvestment Coalition <http://www.ncrc.org/>
Cheryl Cassell, Director Housing Counseling Network, ccassell@ncrc.org
- National Low Income Housing Coalition <http://www.nlihc.org/>
Danilo Pelletiere, Research Director, daniilo@nlihc.org

Learning Outcomes

At the conclusion of this course, students should

- be knowledgeable about the general fundamental concepts of policy and program evaluation;
- be knowledgeable about and be able to collect, manage, and manipulate select data for policy and program evaluation;
- possess the skills needed to select methods appropriate for policy and program evaluation;
- possess the skills needed to interpret results based on policy and program evaluation; and
- be knowledgeable about and be able to communicate and present evaluation findings to public policy makers and other non-technical audiences in a way understandable to them.

Class Website

This class uses Blackboard in order to enhance the online learning experience of students.

This website contains the class syllabus and the class readings. Source:

<http://classes.gmu.edu>.

Course Materials

Required Readings:

Peter H. Rossi, Mark W. Lipsey, and Howard E. Freeman (2004) *Evaluation: A Systematic Approach* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications). 7th edition.

Recommended Reading:

Diane Hacker (2009) *A Pocket Style Manual* (New York, N.Y.: Bedford-St. Martin's).

Course Requirements:

Class Attendance/Participation/Behavior

Students are required to attend class. Many educational studies have shown a high causation between class attendance and high grades. If students have to miss class for professional, i.e., a time conflict at work, or medical reasons they are expected to notify the instructor in advance and to familiarize themselves with the materials missed in class. Students are expected to participate in class discussions. Many educational studies have shown a high causation between participation in class discussions and high grades. Students are expected to arrive on time. **Using electronic devices (which includes surfing the Internet, checking and answering e-mails, checking and answering phone calls and sending or receiving text messages) is not allowed in this class. E-mails submitted to the instructor during class time will not be honored.**

Reading Assignments

Students are required to familiarize themselves with and understand the class readings before each class. Readings will be discussed during class time.

Writing Assignments/Final Paper/Deadlines

Class grades will be based on

- a midterm exam (30%);
- a final group presentation (30 minutes maximum, MS Power Point; 5%);
- a final group paper (10 pages minimum, excluding the technical appendix; 50%);
and
- a peer evaluation of group members (15%).

The mid-term exam will be held in class. The final exam is a group presentation in class and a group paper (four students per group maximum) which is based on an evaluation of a program for a local nonprofit organization, based on the group's preferences.

Assignment Submission, Late or Missing Assignments

The final group paper and the ppt presentation must be submitted on paper on the day they are due and by the beginning of class time (7:20 pm). An assignment that was handed in after 7:20 pm on the day it is due it is considered late. Students will lose 20 (out of 100) points **every 24 hours** after the deadline. After five days assignments will not be evaluated by the instructor (zero grade).

Final grades will be assigned based on the following scale:

A+	over 100.00 points total
A	95.00 points total – 100.00 points total
A-	90.00 points total – 94.99 points total
B+	85.00 points total – 89.99 points total
B	80.00 points total – 84.99 points total
B-	75.00 points total – 79.99 points total
C	50.00 points total – 74.99 points total
F	below 50.00 points total

Appeals to grades on midterms, the final presentation, or the final paper have to be made **in writing within 72 hours** after the assignments have been returned. **Final grades are non-negotiable.**

Academic Accommodation for a Disability

If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please see the instructor and contact the Disability Resource Center (DRC) at 703.993-2474. All academic accommodations must be arranged through the DRC.

GMU/SPP Policy on Plagiarism

The profession of scholarship and the intellectual life of a university as well as the field of public policy inquiry depend fundamentally on a foundation of trust. Thus, any act of plagiarism strikes at the heart of the meaning of the university and the purpose of the School of Public Policy. It constitutes a serious breach of professional ethics and it is unacceptable. Plagiarism is the use of another's words or ideas presented as one's own. It includes, among other things, the use of specific words, ideas, or frameworks that are the product of another's work. Honesty and thoroughness in citing sources is essential to professional accountability and personal responsibility. Appropriate citation is necessary so that arguments, evidence, and claims can be critically examined.

Plagiarism is wrong because of the injustice it does to the person whose ideas are stolen. But it is also wrong because it constitutes lying to one's professional colleagues. From a prudential perspective, it is shortsighted and self-defeating, and it can ruin a professional career.

The faculty of the School of Public Policy takes plagiarism seriously and has adopted a zero tolerance policy. Any plagiarized assignment will receive an automatic grade of "F." This may lead to failure for the course, resulting in dismissal from the University. This dismissal will be noted on the student's transcript. For international students who are on a university-sponsored visa (e.g., F-1, J-1 or J-2), dismissal also results in the revocation of their visa.

To help enforce the SPP policy on plagiarism, all written work submitted in partial fulfillment of course or degree requirements must be available in electronic form so that it can be compared with electronic databases, as well as submitted to commercial services to which the School subscribes. Faculty may at any time submit student's work without prior permission from the student. Individual instructors may require that written work be submitted in electronic as well as printed form. The SPP policy on plagiarism is supplementary to the George Mason University Honor Code; it is not intended to replace it or substitute for it. <http://www.gmu.edu/facstaff/handbook/>

Course Outline

August 30 Topic: Introduction to Class, Introduction to Policy and Program Evaluation

September 6 [Labor Day – University closed – no classes]

Assignment (due September 13th):

Sign up in person for a group project of your choice. Limit: four students per group. Signup sheets are posted outside of the instructor's office (224). First come first served.

September 13 Topic: An Overview of Program Evaluation

Study Assignments for September 13th:

Peter H. Rossi, Mark W. Lipsey, and Howard E. Freeman (2004) *Evaluation: A Systematic Approach* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications). 7th edition. 1-30. (Chapter 1: An Overview of Program Evaluation)

Gary T. Henry (2003) "Influential Evaluations." *American Journal of Evaluation* 24 (4) 515-524. [available via GMU Libraries]

Frank Fischer (1998) "Beyond Empiricism: Policy Inquiry in Postpositivist Perspective." *Policy Studies Journal* 26 (1) 129-146. [available via GMU Libraries]

Assignment (due September 20th):

Contact the selected nonprofit to discuss the program evaluation with them. Gather as much internal information about the program to be evaluated as possible. Be prepared to talk about the discussion with the selected nonprofit in class.

September 20 Topic: The Social Context of Evaluation

Study Assignments for September 20th:

Peter H. Rossi, Mark W. Lipsey, and Howard E. Freeman (2004) *Evaluation: A Systematic Approach* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications). 7th edition. 369-421. (Chapter 12: The Social Context of Evaluation)

Mary Jo Bane (2001) "Expertise, Advocacy and Deliberation: Lessons from Welfare Reform." *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management* 20 (2) 191-197. [available via GMU Libraries]

Lois-Ellin Datta (2000) "Seriously Seeking Fairness: Strategies for Crafting Non-partisan Evaluations in a Partisan World." *American Journal of Evaluation* 21 (1) 1-14. [available via GMU Libraries]

Assignment (due September 27th):

Draft a scope of work for the program evaluation. Be sure to include a realistic timetable for the steps. Be prepared to present your draft of the scope of work in class.

September 27 Topic: Tailoring Evaluations

Study Assignments for September 27th:

Peter H. Rossi, Mark W. Lipsey, and Howard E. Freeman (2004) *Evaluation: A Systematic Approach* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications). 7th edition. 31-65. (Chapter 2: Tailoring Evaluations)

Eleanor Chelimsky (1994) "Evaluation: Where We Are." *Evaluation Practice* 15 (3) 339-345. [available via GMU Libraries]

Eleanor Chelimsky (2008) "A Clash of Cultures: Improving the 'Fit' Between Evaluative Independence and the Political Requirements of a Democratic Society." *American Journal of Evaluation* 29 (4) 400-415. [available via GMU Libraries]

Assignment (due October 4th):

Revise your draft of the scope of work for the program evaluation. Be prepared to present your revised draft of the scope of work in class. Submit your finalized scope of work to the nonprofit.

October 4 Topic: Identifying Issues and Formulating Questions

Study Assignments for October 4th:

Peter H. Rossi, Mark W. Lipsey, and Howard E. Freeman (2004) *Evaluation: A Systematic Approach* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications). 7th edition. 67-99. (Chapter 3: Identifying Issues and Formulating Questions)

Donald Ary, Lucy Chester Jacobs, and Asghar Razavieh (2002) *Introduction to Research in Education* (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Thompson Learning). 6th edition. 41-62. (Chapter 3: The Research Problem) [available on Blackboard]

Alan Bryman and Emma Bell (2007) *Business Research Methods* (Oxford: Oxford University Press). 2nd edition. 74-92 (Chapter 3: Planning A Research Project and Formulating Research Questions) [available on Blackboard]

note: October 6th – 10th: instructor at Association of Collegiate Schools of Planning (ACSP) meeting in Minneapolis, MN – intermittent access to e-mail – apologies for delay in responding

Assignment (due October 12th):

Gather as much external information about the program to be evaluated as possible. Be prepared to talk about the status of your evaluation in class.

October 12 Topic: Assessing the Need for a Program

(Tuesday!) Study Assignments for October 12th:

Peter H. Rossi, Mark W. Lipsey, and Howard E. Freeman (2004) *Evaluation: A Systematic Approach* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications). 7th edition. 101-132. (Chapter 4: Assessing the Need for a Program)

Mary E. Poulin, Philip W. Harris, and Peter R. Jones (2000) “The Significance of Definitions of Success in Program Evaluation.” *Evaluation Review* 24 (5) 516-36. [available via GMU Libraries]

William Shadish (1998) “Some Evaluation Questions.” *Practical Assessment, Research & Evaluation* 6 (3). n/a.
[<http://pareonline.net/getvn.asp?v=6&n=3>]

Assignment (due October 18th):

Be prepared to talk about the status of your evaluation in class.

October 18 Topic: Expressing and Assessing Program Theory

Study Assignments for October 18th:

Peter H. Rossi, Mark W. Lipsey, and Howard E. Freeman (2004) *Evaluation: A Systematic Approach* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications). 7th edition. 133-168. (Chapter 5: Expressing and Assessing Program Theory)

Johanna D. Birckmayer and Carol Hirschon Weiss (2000) "Theory-Based Evaluation in Practice." *Evaluation Review* 24 (4) 407-31. [available via GMU Libraries]

William R. Shadish (1998) "Evaluation Theory is Who We Are." *American Journal of Evaluation* 19 (1) 1-21. [available via GMU Libraries]

Assignment (due October 25th):

Be prepared to talk about the status of your evaluation in class.

October 25 Topic: Assessing and Monitoring Program Process

Study Assignments for October 25th:

Peter H. Rossi, Mark W. Lipsey, and Howard E. Freeman (2004) *Evaluation: A Systematic Approach* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications). 7th edition. 169-201. (Chapter 6: Assessing and Monitoring Program Process)

Louise Forsetlund, Kristine Olaisen Talseth, Peter Bradley, Lena Nordheim and Arild Bjorndal (2003) "Many a Slip between Cup and Lip: Process Evaluation of a Program to Promote and Support Evidence-Based Public Health Practice." *Evaluation Review* 27 (2) 179-209. [available via GMU Libraries]

Joseph S. Wholey and Harry P. Hatry (1992) "The Case for Performance Monitoring." *Public Administration Review* 52 (6) 604-10. [available via GMU Libraries]

Assignment (due November 1st):

Be prepared to talk about the status of your evaluation in class.

November 1 Topic: Measuring and Monitoring Program Outcomes

Study Assignments for November 1st:

Peter H. Rossi, Mark W. Lipsey, and Howard E. Freeman (2004) *Evaluation: A Systematic Approach* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications). 7th edition. 203-232. (Chapter 7: Measuring and Monitoring Program Outcomes)

James Heckman, Carolyn Heinrich, and Jeffrey Smith (1997) “Assessing the Performance of Performance Standards in Public Bureaucracies.” *American Economic Review* 87 (2) 389-395. [available via GMU Libraries]

Burt Perrin (1998) “Effective Use and Misuse of Performance Measurement.” *American Journal of Evaluation* 19 (3) 367-379. [available via GMU Libraries]

note: November 3rd– 6th: instructor at the Association for Public Policy Analysis and Management (APPAM) meeting in Boston, MA – intermittent access to e-mail – apologies for delay in responding

Assignment (due November 8th):

Be prepared to talk about the status of your evaluation in class.

November 8 Topic: Assessing Program Impact: Randomized Field Experiments Midterm

Study Assignments for November 8th:

Peter H. Rossi, Mark W. Lipsey, and Howard E. Freeman (2004) *Evaluation: A Systematic Approach* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications). 7th edition. 233-264. (Chapter 8: Assessing Program Impact: Randomized Field Experiments)

James E. Rosenbaum and Anita Zuberi (2010) “Comparing Residential Mobility Programs: Design Elements, Neighborhood Placements, and Outcomes in MTO and *Gautreaux*.” *Housing Policy Debate* 20 (1) 27-41. [available via GMU Libraries]

Assignment (due November 15th):

Be prepared to talk about the status of your evaluation in class.

November 15 Topic: Assessing Program Impact: Alternative Designs

Study Assignments for November 15th:

Peter H. Rossi, Mark W. Lipsey, and Howard E. Freeman (2004) *Evaluation: A Systematic Approach* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications). 7th edition. 265-300. (Chapter 9: Assessing Program Impact: Alternative Designs)

Alexandra M. Curley (2010) “HOPE VI-A Viable Strategy for Improving Neighborhood Conditions and Resident Self-Sufficiency? The Case of Maverick Gardens in Boston.” *Housing Policy Debate* 20 (2) 237-294. [available via GMU Libraries]

Assignment (due November 22nd):

Be prepared to talk about the status of your evaluation in class.

November 22 Topic: Detecting, Interpreting, and Analyzing Program Effects
Study Assignments for November 22nd:

Peter H. Rossi, Mark W. Lipsey, and Howard E. Freeman (2004)
Evaluation: A Systematic Approach (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage
Publications). 7th edition. 301-330. (Chapter 10: Detecting, Interpreting,
and Analyzing Program Effects)

Jonathan S. Spader and Roberto G. Quercia (2010) “CRA Lending in a
Changing Context: Evidence of Interaction with FHA and Subprime
Originations.” *Journal of Real Estate Finance and Economics*. Available
at: <http://www.springerlink.com/content/8r781047888225q2/>

Assignment (due November 29th):

Be prepared to talk about the status of your evaluation in class.

November 29 Topic: Measuring Efficiency

Study Assignments for November 29th:

Peter H. Rossi, Mark W. Lipsey, and Howard E. Freeman (2004)
Evaluation: A Systematic Approach (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage
Publications). 7th edition. 331-368. (Chapter 11: Measuring Efficiency)

Colorado Coalition for the Homeless (2006) Cost Benefit Analysis and
Program Outcomes Report (Denver, CO: Colorado Coalition for the
Homeless). <http://www.shnny.org/documents/FinalDHFCCostStudy.pdf>

December 6 Topic: In-class group presentations of final project

December 13 Topic: In-class group presentations of final project