

University of Oregon, School of Planning, Public Policy & Management
PPPM 465/565, Program Evaluation
Winter Quarter, 2024
As of Date: 12/14/2023

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Important Information	
Course Location	LIL 185
Course Meeting Times	Tues and Thurs 1200-1320
Meet the Professor (Office 121B)	T 1330-1530 (open hours)
Make an Appointment	arus+PE@uoregon.edu
Required Text	None! All readings from open source/UO available subscriptions.
Canvas Page	https://canvas.uoregon.edu/courses/237312
Professor's Teaching Philosophy	https://sites.google.com/pdx.edu/andrewrusso/home

Welcome Message

On behalf of the School of Planning, Public Policy, & Management, welcome to another academic quarter. As your professor this quarter, I want to convey that it is my goal to facilitate your learning in a welcoming and collegial environment.

As an educator, I firmly adhere to the idea that education goes beyond the mere transmission of facts and figures; it is a dynamic process aimed at empowering students to become critical thinkers with a profound grasp of the world. My educational approach is deeply rooted in open-mindedness and critical theory, recognizing the diversity of learning styles and backgrounds among students. Within my classroom, I strive to cultivate an environment that promotes candid discourse, encourages the interrogation of assumptions, and invites the exploration of diverse viewpoints. My primary objective is to facilitate learning rather than obstruct it, recognizing that each student has unique needs and preferences.

What will you gain from this course?

- Develop knowledge of and skills in culturally responsive evaluation & and identify potential ethical dilemmas in evaluation.
- Work with stakeholders to frame evaluation and performance measurement questions.
- Understand different models and how to apply them.
- Help different types of social sector organizations align their mission and strategy with their measurement practices.
- Design clear and useful data collection instruments for use in evaluation work.
- Design user-oriented reports to convey evaluation findings.
- Develop useful and feasible recommendations based on evaluation findings.

Important Items to Remember

- Textbooks and Other Media: There are no required textbooks; all course materials are accessible journal articles or open-source content.
- Preparation: Please complete all readings/listenings/watchings before Tuesday's class begins. Class time will be devoted to reviewing and discussion.
- Class Timeliness: I acknowledge different cultural perceptions of timeliness. Please aim to arrive within the first 10 minutes of the class start time, but no later than 12:10.
- Support: If you encounter difficulties in the course, don't hesitate to discuss them with me. I'm here to help ensure your success.
- Freedom to Step Out: Feel free to step out of the classroom if needed.
- Class Attendance: If you need to miss a class, a simple email notification is sufficient. No justification is required; I just want to ensure your well-being.
- Health Considerations: If you're unwell or exposed to illness, follow healthcare recommendations. Whether it's the flu, COVID, or a common cold, take precautions.
- My Role: I'm here to facilitate your learning and provide a foundation for you to build upon.
- Diverse Perspectives: Embrace the diversity of experiences among each person. Class participation is an excellent way to benefit from this diversity.
- Assignments: Undergraduates and graduates sometimes have different assignments, which will be clearly indicated.
- Openness to Learning: It's okay not to know everything. Knowing how to find answers and solve problems is vital in our field and contributes to your success and reputation.
- Assignment Details: Detailed assignment prompts, templates, rubrics, and descriptions are on the Canvas page.

Course Overview

This course is intended to give you a foundational introduction, and an appreciation of, the contributions and limitations of program evaluation in the social sector. The social sector here includes organizations and agencies in the public, nonprofit, and public health domains. Together we will focus on the conceptual, organizational, methodological, and ethical problems that face evaluators, and build basic skills needed to conduct evaluations. The course is divided into three sections:

Section 1. Introducing Evaluation

Together, we begin by introducing evaluation and laying ethical groundwork. We will answer questions such as:

- Where did this field originate?
- What is it meant to accomplish?
- How do professionals and social scientists use it?
- Who, or what, are stakeholders?
- Who critiques the field and why?
- Program Evaluation gone right, wrong, and sideways.

Section 2. Surveying A Program's Landscape and Evaluation Planning

We will investigate real-world applications and discuss the methods and frameworks used in the field. We will explore why program evaluation is a distinct domain worthy of its own course.

- Showcase tools and skills employed in the field.
- Discuss theoretical underpinnings.
- Evaluating programs aligned with organizational strategy and mission.
- Explore and refresh our understanding of methods and research design.
- Examine counterfactuals; evaluating what might have been.

Section 3. Doing Evaluation

This is all about putting it together and looking forward. In this section, we will:

- Examine the practical steps needed to conduct successful evaluations.
- Investigate Artificial Intelligence and its applications in the field.
- Discuss the critical perspectives in the field.
- Propose/Pitch an evaluation strategy for a program.

Course Details and Schedule

This course will provide a solid foundation for students to build upon as they navigate the dynamic field of program evaluation. Starting with a comprehensive overview of the discipline, the course will gradually guide students toward the practical application of their knowledge by empowering them to design or critique evaluations for real-world programs. Throughout the journey, students will develop the critical skills needed to assess the impact and effectiveness of various initiatives effectively. Ultimately, this course will equip students to not only evaluate programs but also to confidently present their findings, ensuring that they emerge from the class well-prepared to contribute meaningfully to the realms of nonprofit, government, and public health, armed with the ability to make data-driven decisions and effect positive change in their respective fields.

Each week is broken down into two components:

Tuesdays

Readings Review – Talk about the readings and key takeaways

Lecture and Small Group Activities – Lecture mixed with applicable small group breakout sessions

Thursdays

Practical Applications and Case Studies – Real applications

Group Discussions – Large group and some small group work on practical applications of the week's theme.

Though the following reading list looks exhausting, I promise it's light and informative. Let me explain:

I once took a class that demanded I read 2-3 books per week. That is not a typo, and I would not do that to you.

In many cases, the selections are only a few pages of much larger works or short practical overviews. Scholarly articles, chapters, and frameworks for reading were selected to complement, not replace, our in-class discussions.

Section 1

Week 1 – Introductions and Overview	
I ask you to read and listen to:	Read: Rossi, Lipsey, Henry, (2019) pp. 23-31 THEN listen to: Freakonomics Radio: Do the Police have a management problem? With the following in mind – What programs are being implemented? How are they being assessed? What metrics/voices/measurements are missing?
Assignment (Mandatory) Due Jan 16th NLT 1159	Think About an Organization and Sector
Week 2 – History and Theories of Program Eval	
I ask you to read:	Rossi, Lipsey, & Hendy, (2019) pp 110 - 144
Assignment Due Jan 23rd NLT 115	History and Analysis of Program Evaluation
Week 3 – Legitimacy, Dilemmas, and Ethics	
I ask you to read:	Bernstein and Aulgur (2017) pp 1-6 AEAGP (2011) HMT Magenta Book pp 75-79 THEN READ: McLoughlin (2015) With the following in mind – Who gets the blame/praise? Is the program working as intended, for whom? What can we takeaway?
Assignment Due Jan 30th NLT 1159	Ethical Issues in Program Evaluation

Section 2

Week 4 – Frameworks and Eval Tools	
I ask you to read:	Kellog Foundation Logic Model The KU Community Toolbox – Chapter 36 Section 1
Assignment Due Feb 6th NLT 1159	Frameworks in Program Evaluation
Week 5 – Scope and Methods	
I ask you to read:	Peterson, Schmid, and Kosoki (2019) Prosek, (2018)
Assignment Reminder Due Feb 6th NLT 1159	Frameworks in Program Evaluation
Mid-Term Meeting with the Professor	
Week 6 – Evaluating Evaluations (Heavy Week)	

I ask you to read:	KU Community Toolbox Section 5 Rossi, Lipsey, Henry (2019) Chapters 11 and 12 (pp 393-429) OPTIONAL/SKIM: Mertens & Wilson (2018) Chapter 9 (pp 287-334)
Assignment Due Feb 13th NLT 1159	Case Study – TEEN Action Program

Section 3

Week 7 – Building Your Evaluation Plan	
I ask you to read:	Hendricks et al. (2008)
Assignment Due Feb 20th NLT 1159	Case Study – Green Cities Collaboration
Week 8 – Stakeholders and Impacts	
I ask you to read:	None – Rest your eyes.
Assignment	None – We’re taking a breather.
Week 9 – Critical Perspectives	
I ask you to read:	Sandberg et al (2022) Eikenberry & Kluver (2004)
Assignment Due Feb 27th NLT 1159	Critical Perspectives and Interpretations
Week 10 – Looking Toward the Future: AI and Tomorrow’s Challenges	
I ask you to listen to:	AI Could Solve Some of Humanity’s Hardest Problems. With the following in mind: Is AI here to stay? How can/should We use it in program evaluation now that it is here?
Assignment Due Mar 5th NLT 1159 (Mandatory for Graduate Students)	AI, Ethics, and Program Evaluation
Towards Finals Week	Work on your choice of assignment.

FINALS WEEK

Submit Your Video Presentation/Video Essay

Finals week is tough for everyone. We will discuss during Week 10 if we want to meet virtually or in-person on the assigned date and time.

Documented Disabilities

Students who have a documented disability and anticipate needing accommodations in this course should make arrangements with me as soon as possible. Feel free to stop by my office, speak with me before/after class, or email me.

Academic Misconduct

You are expected at all times to do your own work. Copying content from other students or other authors and submitting it as your own work is grounds for failing the class. The University Student Conduct Code (available at conduct.uoregon.edu) defines academic misconduct. Students are prohibited from committing or attempting to commit any act that constitutes academic misconduct. For example, students should not give or receive (or attempt to give or receive) unauthorized help on assignments or examinations without express permission from me. Students should properly acknowledge and document all sources of information (e.g. quotations, paraphrases, ideas). If there is any question about whether an act constitutes academic misconduct, it is your obligation to clarify the question with me before committing the act. Additional information about a common form of academic misconduct, plagiarism, is available at: www.libweb.uoregon.edu/guides/plagiarism/students.

Class Artificial Intelligence Use Policy

In this mixed graduate and undergraduate class, the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools and technologies is not only permitted but actively encouraged to enhance your learning and research experiences. AI can be a valuable resource for your assignments, projects, and research endeavors within the scope of this course. However, to ensure transparency and maintain academic integrity, we must establish some guidelines for the responsible use of AI in this learning environment.

You are required to submit the prompts or input data you used when using AI-generated content. This step is crucial to maintaining transparency in your work. By providing the prompts, you allow me to assess your understanding of the assignment and the AI's role in completing it. It also ensures that your use of AI aligns with the course's learning objectives. When submitting prompts, please ensure they are clear, relevant to the task, and adequately document any modifications made during the AI generation process. We value your creativity and innovation but also seek to evaluate your proficiency in setting up AI tools effectively.

As the instructor, I am here to support your exploration of AI technologies. Though we will not discuss AI until the final week, I will provide guidance on the appropriate use of AI tools and technologies to help you maximize their benefits. I will also evaluate your AI-generated content based on the provided prompts and offer feedback on both the output and the quality of the prompts. These prompts, if AI is used, will be part of your assignment grade.

Misuse of AI, including failure to submit prompts or using AI for academic misconduct, will have consequences in line with the university's policies on academic integrity. However, in cases of unintentional misuse or a lack of understanding, I am committed to providing education and guidance to help you use AI tools ethically and responsibly.

Inclusion & Duty to Report Sexual Assault

The School of Architecture and Allied Arts, the administrative home of the PPPM department, is a community that values inclusion. We are committed to equal opportunities for all students to develop individually, professionally, and academically regardless of ethnicity, heritage, gender, sexual orientation, ability, socio-economic standing, cultural beliefs and traditions. We are dedicated to an environment that is inclusive and fosters awareness, understanding, and respect for diversity. If you feel excluded or threatened, please let me know. If you are reluctant to speak to someone in person, please know that the University Bias Response Team is also a resource that can assist you. Find more information at their website at <http://bias.uoregon.edu/index.html> or by phoning 541-346-2037. In addition, we are also committed to providing an environment free of all forms of prohibited discrimination and sexual harassment, including sexual assault, domestic and dating violence and gender based stalking. If this happens to you or a student you know, I will counsel you/and or the student to seek confidential assistance at the University Health Center and the University Counseling Center. I am required by the University to report this to the PPPM Department Head and the Office of Affirmative Action and Equal Opportunity so that the incident can be investigated and appropriate action taken.

Overall

Respect and understand each other's shared humanity; our challenges; our backgrounds; our dreams;
and our desire to lead rich and fulfilling lives.