



GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY

McCourt School of Public Policy

INDEPENDENT STUDY

POLICY AND PROGRAM EVALUATION¹

(MMPL Course #901-01 / Tutorial: Policy Leadership)

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MEETING TIME: Independent Study – Meeting Times and Locations to be agreed upon by instructor and student, a minimum of four times over the semester.
Meeting dates: 9/3; 10/8; 11/5 and 12/3

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Policy and program evaluation is a critical part of designing policy and operating effective programs. Evaluations provide information to assist policymakers in making decisions about policy and programs to fund, modify, expand or discontinue. Evaluation also serves as an accountability tool for program managers and funders. This independent study is designed to provide an introduction to evaluation methodology and evaluation tools, and will present both the theoretical background and real-world examples. Evaluation tools are used in all policy areas and by public and private sectors.

REQUIRED COURSE TEXTBOOK READINGS

(1) Bardach, Eugene. “A Practical Guide for Policy Analysis: The Eightfold Path to More Effective Problem Solving,” 4th Edition (2011). <http://www.amazon.com/Practical-Guide-Policy-Analysis-Eightfold/dp/1608718425/>

(2) Gertler, Paul, Sebastian Martinez, Patrick Premand, Laura B. Rawlings, and Christel M. J. Vermeersch. “Impact Evaluation in Practice, The World Bank 2011,” http://siteresources.worldbank.org/EXTHDOFFICE/Resources/5485726-1295455628620/Impact_Evaluation_in_Practice.pdf

¹ This Independent Study is based off the syllabus and course design by Nada O. Eissa, “Policy and Program Evaluation (MMPL #725).”

(3) Peter Rossi, Howard Freeman, and Mark Lipsey. "Evaluation: A Systematic Approach," 7th Edition (2004). Sage Publications. <http://www.amazon.com/Evaluation-Systematic-Peter-Henry-Rossi/dp/0761908943/>

INDEPENDENT STUDY OBJECTIVES

By the end of the semester, be able to:

(1) Explain the major concepts in program evaluation:

- Types of evaluation and their purpose
- Sources of data
- Study designs, including randomized control trials, and threats to validity

(2) Perform skills required in conducting program evaluation:

- Design of a conceptual framework
- Develop objectives and indicators

(3) Write an evaluation plan

ASSIGNMENTS & PAPER

There will be three assignments: two take-home short answer tests and one paper. The first short answer test will evaluate the student's understanding of the major concepts in program evaluation and will be **administered October 1st and due October 5th** (25 percent of total grade). The second test will evaluate the student's understanding of the skills required to conduct program evaluation and be **administered November 5th and due November 9th** (25 percent of final grade).

A final paper, due the last week of classes for the semester (**December 11th**), will be an evaluation design and plan of a public policy program or issue agreed upon between the instructor and the student (50 percent of total grade).

The final evaluation-design paper should include a clear statement of the question; a conceptual framework (theory of change); an empirical model (method, data, etc.); and finally your thoughts and insights about how policy professionals can use the results for (re)-designing policy. The paper will be graded along the following criteria:

Criteria	Points
Your question is well defined and policy relevant.	20
Your theory of change is well-defined, and includes supporting evidence (theoretical and empirical)	25
Your empirical model specifies the method and explains the basis for choosing it; it also explains what data you choose	25
Your paper contains a clear introduction and conclusion with transitions between paragraphs that give the paper flow. Each paragraph has a clear topic sentence and supporting text.	10
Writing is clear, concise, and free of grammatical errors.	10
TOTAL	100

READINGS – MAJOR CONCEPTS IN PROGRAM EVALUATION

Topic 1: Introduction to the course and the field of program evaluation; purposes and stakeholders.

- Rossi, Chapter 1
- CDC, Introduction to Program Evaluation for Comprehensive Tobacco Control Programs, pp., 1-20.
http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/tobacco_control_programs/surveillance_evaluation/evaluation_manual/

Topic 2: Pre-program evaluation activities: needs assessment

- Rossi, Chapters 4 and 5
- Chen, Wang & Lin (1997). Evaluating the process and outcome of a garbage reduction program in Taiwan. *Evaluation Review*, 21(1): 27-42.
- Kaplan, Sue A. and Garrett, Katherine E. (2005). The use of logic models by community-based initiatives. *Evaluation and Program Planning*, 28(2): 167-172.
- Unrau (2001). Using client interviews to illuminate outcomes in program logic models: a case example. *Evaluation and Program Planning*, 24: 353-361.

Topic 3: What does the program do? Process evaluation, formative evaluation and implementation analysis

- Rossi, Chapter 6
- Dewa, Horgan, Russell & Keates (2001). What? Another form? The process of measuring and comparing service utilization in a community mental health program model. *Evaluation and Program Planning*, 24:239-247.

READINGS – SKILLS REQUIRED TO CONDUCT PROGRAM EVALUATION

Topic 4: Impact evaluation: design, internal validity

- Rossi, Chapters 7 and Chapter 8.
- Lewin, A. (2001). Changing work ethic and welfare dependence through welfare reform: the 100-hour waiver experiment for AFDC-U. *Evaluation Review*, 25(3): 370:388.

Topic 5: Impact evaluation: quasi-experimental designs

- Rossi, Chapter 9
- Ballart, Xavier & Riba, Clara (1995). Impact of legislation requiring moped and motorbike riders to wear helmets. *Evaluation and Program Planning*, 18: 311-320.

Topic 6: Non-Experimental Designs: Matching, Reflexive Designs

- Dehejia, Rajeev, and Sadek Wahba (1999), "Causal Effects in Non-Experimental Studies: Reevaluating the Evaluation of Training Programs," *Journal of the American Statistical Association*, V(94), N 488, pp. 1053-1062.

Topic 7: Formulating Research Questions, External Validity and Measurement

- Rossi, Chapter 7
- Beebe, Timothy J., Harrison, Patricia A., Sharma, Anu, Hedger, Scott (2001). The Community Readiness Survey: Development and Validation. *Evaluation Review*, 25(1): 55-71.

Topic 8: Data Collection and Sampling

- Rossi, Chapter 10

- Grossman Tierney (1998). Does mentoring work? An impact study of the Big Brothers and Big Sisters program. *Evaluation Review*, 22(3): 403-426.

Topic 9: Qualitative Methods

- Rossi, Chapter 11.
- Doucouliagos, Hristos and Martin Paldam (2007). The aid effectiveness literature: The sad results of 40 years of research. <http://www.econ.cam.ac.uk/research/repec/cam/pdf/cwpe0773.pdf>

Topic 10: Evaluation and Research Ethics

- Rossi, Chapter 12
- Resnick, David (2007). The New EPA Regulations for Protecting Human Subjects: Haste Makes Waste. *Hastings Cent Rep.* 2007 ; 37(1): 17–21”
- <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2695594/>
- Bluestein, J. (2005). Toward a more public discussion of the ethics of federal social program evaluation. *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management*, 24(4): 824-852.