

Department of Epidemiology and Biostatistics
531A Methods and Issues in Program and Policy
Evaluation in Health and Human Services

Fall 2004

Instructor:

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Purpose: The purpose of the course is to familiarize students with the major issues in the fields of program and policy 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.

Students will also develop an understanding of the relative value of different designs that can be applied to evaluation research. Students will have the opportunity to develop their theoretical, methodological and interpretive skills through various examples and applications and through the development of a proposal on an evaluation question of interest to them.

Classes:

Monday 2:00-5:00 pm. Room: K116 Kresge Bldg

Textbooks:

- (1) Posavac, E. and R. Carey (2003) *Program Evaluation: Methods and Case Studies 6th Edition*, Englewood Cliff, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- (2) Treasury Board of Canada, Secretariat. (1998) *Program Evaluation Methods: Measurement and Attribution of Program Results, Third Edition* downloadable file:
http://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/eval/pubs/pub96_e.asp
- (3) 531A Selected Course Readings: available from book store

Supplemental references:

- (1) Sidani, S., & Braden, C. J. (1998) *Evaluating Nursing Interventions A Theory Driven Approach* Sage Publ. Thousand Oaks, CA
- (2) *Theory at a Glance*: <http://www.nci.nih.gov/cancerinformation/theory-at-a-glance>

(3) *Literature Review - Study on the Function of Evaluation Focusing on Results: A Guide to Performance Measurement* at: http://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/eval/pubs/pub96_e.asp

(4) Frechtling, J. and L. Sharp (1997) *User-Friendly Handbook for Mixed Method Evaluations* <http://www.ehr.nsf.gov/EHR/REC/pubs/NSF97-153/START.HTM>

Grades in this course will be based on the following:

Term Paper: (20 p. proposal for an evaluation study)	60%
Midterm test	40%

Students are expected to attend the classes and to prepare for each class by reading the articles and chapters listed below, and to actively participate in the discussions. For each class, a number of critical themes, as outlined below, have been provided to guide students through the readings and activities, and to frame the lectures and discussion.

Teaching and learning is a shared responsibility, influenced by individual knowledge and experience, but achieved through expanding our awareness of the different issues and epistemologies. Commitment, preparation and active participation are important ingredients to realize this goal. Your preparation and participation is important to your learning and the learning of your colleagues.

September 13: Introduction

What is evaluative research and what do we mean by programs and policies?

Readings: Posavac & Carey (2003) Chapters 1, 2
Lipsey (1988)
Alberts et al., (1992) abstract ONLY
Barsan et al., (1994) abstract
Ho et al., (1988) abstract
White et al., (1985) abstract

September 20: Key Concepts in Evaluation Research, Part 1

Measurement, construct validity,
and internal validity, generalizability and external validity,
Chance and statistical conclusion validity
Methods of control

Readings: Treasury Board of Canada, Secretariat. (1998) Chapter 2
Cordray (1989)
Sims (2001)
Carr et al., (1996)
Barak & Wander-Schwartz (1999)

September 27: Theory-driven evaluation: why "black box paradigms" don't work

Methods-oriented vs. theory-driven evaluations.

Readings: Posavac & Carey (2003) Chapter 3
Petrosino (2001)
Brown and Goel (1996)
Vingilis et al., (1998)

October 4: Research Approaches

Qualitative and quantitative methods
Triangulation and multiple methods
Pre-existing data sets
Development of original datasets.

Readings: Posavac & Carey (2003) Chapters 4, 12
Treasury Board of Canada, Secretariat. (1998) Chapter 4
Sofaer (1999)
Vanderplaat et al., (2001)
Greene et al., (1989)

October 18: Quantitative Research Designs

Pre-experimental, true experimental and quasi experimental
Sources of invalidity for designs.

Readings: Posavac & Carey (2003) Chapters 8, 9, 10
Scott et al., (2001)
Ross et al., (1998)
Squires et al., (1998)

October 25: Midterm Exam and Class Discussion of Projects

November 1: Approaches to Model Development

Program logic model

Readings: Rush and Ogborne (1991)
Porteus et al., (2002)
Thiessen (2002)

November 8: Components of Evaluation Research, Part 1

Program rationale
Needs assessment

Readings: Posavac & Carey (2003) Chapter 6
Makrides et al., (1998)
Mercier et al., (2000)

November 15: Components of Evaluation Research, Part 2

Formative/process evaluation
Short-term outcome evaluation
Summative/long-term outcome/impact evaluation

Readings: Posavac & Carey (2003) Chapters 7, review 8, 9, 10
Dwyer and Komorowski, (1999)
Rubin (1997)
Hansen & Lambert (2003)

November 22: Components of Evaluation Research, Part 3

Efficiency evaluation

Effectiveness evaluation

Readings: Posavac & Carey (2003) Chapter 11
Clyne & Edwards (2002)
Browne et al., (1999)

November 29: Evaluation in the Real World and Student Project Assistance

Issues, challenges and examples.

Readings: Posavac & Carey (2003) Chapter 5
Langevin (2001)
Poland et al., (2002)
Lord & Rush (2002)
DeLeon & Williams (1997)

December 6: Student Presentations of Logic Models and Proposals