

**UST 602**  
**RESEARCH DESIGN & PROGRAM EVALUATION**  
**Levin College of Urban Affairs**  
**Cleveland State University**  
**Fall 2017**

**General Information**

Professor: Obed Pasha

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Office Hours: 318 Urban College Building; Wed 2:00 – 5:00 pm, or by appointment.

Class Meetings: Wed 6:00 – 9:50 pm

Class Location: 247 UR

**Course Description**

This course equips students with tools to evaluate the success of public and nonprofit policies and programs. Course topics will survey basic practices such as process and outcome evaluation, as well as techniques including experimental and quasi-experimental designs for effective policy and program administration. The course also explores the advantages of using evaluation as a mechanism for program improvement.

**Learning Objectives**

By the end of the course students will be able to:

- Explain the basic components of evaluation research.
- Define the link between theory and evaluation research.
- Describe the advantages and disadvantages of different assessment designs.
- Select appropriate methods for a given assessment design.
- Design a competent and comprehensive evaluation proposal.

**Course Requirements**

- Each student must complete the assigned readings as scheduled and on time.
- Each student must actively participate in class discussions.
- Each student must be respectful of other students' ideas and experiences.

**Required Text:** Class readings posted online on Blackboard.

**Grade Weights**

Class Preparation and Quality Participation - 10%

In-Class Group Assignments - 20%

Group Discussion Presentation - 10%

Mid-Term Exam - 20%

Term Project and Presentation - 40%

TOTAL - 100%

All assignments should be submitted in 12-font, double-spaced A-4 pages with 1" margin on all sides. Must be submitted electronically on Blackboard AND brought as hard copies to class.

**Class Participation:** Class participation will be graded by attendance, the quality of in-class assignments, and by observed participation in class activities. A student attending the class without significantly contributing in discussions will get a B for participation.

**In-Class Group Assignments:** Each group will work on specific in-class tasks during the semester and submit their work at the end of the class.

**Group Discussion Presentation:** This will be an in-class project in which I will assign each group a separate article evaluating the impact of a policy or program. You will synthesize that evaluation into a 10-minute presentation. The presentation should consist of an introduction and background, stakeholder analysis, logic model, evaluation question, evaluation design, and results. Also, identify weaknesses and areas of improvement.

**Term Project:** Learning to develop an effective and actionable evaluation plan is one of the most important skills for a program evaluator, data analyst, policy maker, or public/nonprofit manager. This is an individual project that will require you to identify an existing public or nonprofit policy or program, and write a complete evaluation design. You will submit the assignment in following parts (see Appendix 2 for details and expectation):

- Introduction
- Stakeholder Analysis and Evaluation Question
- Logic Model
- Literature Review
- Evaluation Design

I will assign “mock” grades and provide feedback on these assignments. The feedback can be used to revise and submit the assignment within 2-weeks of getting feedback to improve grades. This will only be a one-time opportunity. You are encouraged to discuss the feedback in person with me. Near the end of the semester, you will combine these parts, add a cover-page and conclusion, and submit the assignment as your term project.

**Mid-Term Exam:** The mid-term exam will test your use of the concepts from the course and basic knowledge of ‘key terms’. Every week is important toward your ability to understand the material. This will be an in-class exam, you can bring one 12-font, single-spaced A-4 cheat-sheet (one-sided) with 1” margins on all sides.

**Grading Scale:**

96 – 100 = A	83 – 86 = B	73 – 76 = C
90 – 95 = A-	80 – 82 = B-	70 – 72 = C-
87 – 89 = B+	77 – 79 = C+	< 69 = F

**Important Points to Consider:** Please follow a standard formatting style such as APA, MLA or Chicago manual for your assignments, and use it consistently. Do not forget to use page numbers and sub-headings. Make sure you include your name in the assignments. I expect superior writing and presentation skills from each one of you.

**Plagiarism and Academic Honesty:** CSU guidelines on academic honesty will be enforced in this course, and you should be familiar with the student code of conduct and policies (<https://www.csuohio.edu/sites/default/files/3344-21-02.pdf>). It is your responsibility to ask questions if you are unclear about what is appropriate. Academic dishonesty violations will result in a minimum penalty of a '0' on the assignment.

**Classroom Respect Policy:** Scientific inquiry requires willingness to listen to others and openness to the possibility that our own ideas are wrong. The only way to practice this principle is to listen attentively while others are speaking and to respond constructively to an idea with which you disagree.

**Students with Disabilities:** If you have a condition that makes it difficult to complete the work described in this syllabus, please notify the student disability services office and the instructor within the first two weeks of class to develop alternative arrangements. All information and documentation of the disability will be confidential. All documentation must be received and relayed to the instructor within the first four weeks of class.

## **COURSE SCHEDULE AND READING ASSIGNMENTS**

*Note: All readings and links to case studies will be available to download via Blackboard. Dates and readings are subject to change. Students are responsible for any such changes announced during class.*

### **August 30                      Introduction.**

- Definition and process of evaluation.
- Why evaluate policy/program?
- What are some unique aspects of public policy/program evaluation?
- Who should evaluate?

Readings: Please come prepared with answers to the above questions.

### **September 6                      Politics of the evaluation process.**

- Politics and stakeholder management.
- Values and morals.
- Evaluation question and criteria.
- Resource needs.

Readings:

Henry, Gary T., and Melvin M. Mark. "Beyond use: Understanding evaluation's influence on attitudes and action." *American Journal of Evaluation*, 24 (2003), 293-314.

Cullen, Anne E., Chris L. S. Coryn, and Jim Rugh. "The politics and consequences of including stakeholders in international development evaluation." *American Journal of Evaluation*, 32 (2011), 345-361.

**September 13**            **Politics of the evaluation process (continued).**

Due: Introduction for Term Project.

**September 20**            **Preparation.**

- Needs assessment.
- Program theory.
- Input, process, output, outcome, and impact evaluation.
- Indicators.
- Unit of analysis.

Readings:

Savaya, Riki, and Mark Waysman. "The logic model: A tool for incorporating theory in development and evaluation of programs." *Administration in Social Work*, 29 (2005), 85-103.

Steckler, Allan, et al., "Pathways process evaluation results: A school-based prevention trial to promote healthful diet and physical activity in American Indian third, fourth, and fifth grade students." *Preventive Medicine*, 37 (2003), S80-S90.

**September 27**            **Preparation (continued).**

Due: Stakeholder Analysis for Term Project.

**October 4**                **Literature Review.**

- How to identify previous studies.
- Identifying the evaluation methodology of past studies.
- Using strengths and weaknesses of past studies.
- Developing evaluation question and method based on past work.

Readings:

Randolph, Justus J. "A guide to writing the dissertation literature review." *Practical Assessment, Research & Evaluation* 14, no. 13 (2009): 1-13.

Due: Logic Model for Term Project.

**October 11                    Experimental designs.**

- Data management (cross-sectional, time-series, and panel)
- Randomized field experiments.
- Control and intervention groups.
- Problems and issues.

Readings:

Cook & Campbell, page 298-321.

**October 18                    Experimental designs (continued).**

**October 25                    Quasi-experimental designs.**

- Need for quasi-experiments.
- Weak quasi-experiments.
- Strong quasi-experiments.
- Problems and issues.

Readings:

Cook & Campbell, page 244-268.

Due: Literature Review and Evaluation Question for Term Project.

**November 1                    Quasi-experimental designs (continued).**

- Regression discontinuity designs.
- Interrupted time-series designs.
- Correlational designs.
- Group assignment.

Readings: Cook & Campbell, page 268-298.

**November 8                    Quasi-experimental designs (continued).**

**November 15                    Mid-term exam.**

**November 22            Review of Term Papers and Examples of Evaluation.**

Due: Evaluation Design for Term Project.

**November 29            Discussion session presentations.**

Leos-Urbel, Jacob. 2014. "What is a Summer Job Worth? The Impact of Summer Youth Employment on Academic Outcomes." *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management* 33 (4): 891-911.

Niu, Sunny Xinchun, and Marta Tienda. "The impact of the Texas top ten percent law on college enrollment: A regression discontinuity approach," *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management*, 29 (2009), 84-110.

Courtemanche, Charles J. and Daniela Zapata. 2014. "Does Universal Coverage Improve Health? The Massachusetts Experience." *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management* 33 (1): 36-69.

Neumark, David and Patrick Button. 2014. "Did Age Discrimination Protections Help Older Workers Weather the Great Recession?" *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management* 33 (3): 566-601.

Dee, T.S. and Jacob, B., 2011. The impact of No Child Left Behind on student achievement. *Journal of Policy Analysis and management*, 30(3), pp.418-446.

Klawitter, M., 2011. Multilevel analysis of the effects of antidiscrimination policies on earnings by sexual orientation. *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management*, 30(2), pp.334-358.

Xu, Z., Hannaway, J. and Taylor, C., 2011. Making a difference? The effects of Teach for America in high school. *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management*, 30(3), pp.447-469.

**December 6            Term project presentations.**

**December 13            Term project submission.**

## **Appendix 1: Individual Term Project**

The individual term project consists of five separate parts. Each part carries its own grades, which will be added once you submit the final project at the end of the semester. Please do not exceed page limits, going under page limits is okay. The initial grades that you get for these distinct parts of your Term project can be improved by revising and resubmitting the assignment within 2 weeks of receiving my feedback.

This project will test your writing skills, flow, organization, and content.

### ***Part 1: Introduction***

Grades: 5%  
Due on: September 13  
Page limit: 2

Select any public or nonprofit policy or program of your choice for your individual Term project. This may be a policy/program that you are familiar with, or are interested in exploring its effectiveness. I would strongly advise to choose a project topic that is of interest to you since you will be working on it for the rest of the semester, do not make your choice for the sake of convenience. In your introduction, start by explaining the policy/program, its mechanisms, intentions, and history (in any order). Then justify why you have selected this topic, and explain what you expect to achieve by evaluating this project. Essentially, set-up the importance of the program itself and why should we care about evaluating it.

### ***Part 2: Stakeholder Analysis***

Grades: 5%  
Due on: September 27  
Page limit: 3

Run a detailed stakeholder analysis for the policy/program. Include a minimum of 3 stakeholders in the analysis. For each of these stakeholders, explain why they are important, how are they affected by the program, would they support or oppose the policy or program, and Termly, what criteria would they use to evaluate the success of the program.

### ***Part 3: Logic Model***

Grades: 5%  
Due on: October 4  
Page limit: 2

Lay out a logic model of your proposed policy or program. The logic model should include inputs, activities, outputs, outcomes (short-medium-long term), and impacts. The logic model should depict the progress of your program, and how will it achieve its intended purpose. Explain your logic model in no more than a page, mainly justifying the links between the components of the logic model, what are the assumptions or external factors of the program (if any), and what might be some of the weaknesses. You might use an existing logic model of your selected program/policy or create your own model.

#### ***Part 4: Literature Review and Evaluation Question***

Grades: 10%  
Due on: October 25  
Page limit: 4

Conduct an extensive literature review of the existing studies on your topic. Select any 5 of these studies and explain their evaluation methods in detail, and identify their strengths and weaknesses. Synthesize these five studies to build a justification of your evaluation: What new question will you ask? What new method will you use? How will your evaluation be an improvement on past work on the subject?

Identify the evaluation question using the stakeholder criteria and literature review. This would determine your primary criteria for the success of the program. You can have multiple criteria, but they need to be justified.

#### ***Part 5: Evaluation Design***

Grades: 15%  
Due on: November 22  
Page limit: 7

Choose 3 measurement indicators for process, output, and outcome evaluation each. These indicators should be derived from your logic model and evaluation question. For each of the 9 selected indicators, identify the data collection source, as well as the number of observations you will include before and/or after the treatment. Lay out the analysis plan. Identify control groups (if any) and justify your choice. Identify the type of your quasi-experimental design, show the notation system, and justify your choice. Think about how history (use examples) or maturation might impact your evaluation and how would the selected design help reduce these issues.

***Term Project submission deadline:*** December 13, 2017