

PADP 8640

Program Evaluation Fall 2023

Thursdays 6:15 – 9:00 pm
Gwinnett Center

Dr. J. Edward Kellough
280C Baldwin Hall
email: kellough@uga.edu

Meetings outside of class
may be arranged by email and
conducted via Zoom or phone

Course Description and Objectives

This course focuses on selected topics in the evaluation of government or nonprofit programs. The purpose is to give students a broad understanding of program evaluation concepts and methods. We will review evaluation strategies used in the planning of public programs, approaches to assessing the implementation of those programs, and methods used to estimate the impact of programs. The core objectives of the course are to enable students to:

- 1) Understand basic concepts and methods of evaluation research
- 2) Understand and develop logic models underlying public programs
- 3) Identify and understand how to measure program outcomes
- 4) Understand types of evaluation research designs, data collection methods, and data analysis techniques commonly used in impact evaluation
- 5) Develop an appropriate evaluation plan to assess the impact of a program

These course objectives are intended to promote student mastery of two of the five core competencies required for NASPAA accreditation of our MPA program:

Competency 2: To participate in and contribute to the public policy process

Students in the Master of Public Administration program at The University of Georgia will understand the public policy process at the federal, state, and local levels, including formulating, implementing, and evaluating policy. They will develop the ability to interpret and persuasively communicate information regarding policy alternatives through memoranda and presentations. Additionally, students will analyze policy alternatives using quantitative and qualitative tools to evaluate decisions and explain potential ramifications for diverse constituencies. They will learn to manage financial resources and develop a comprehensive budget proposal to achieve organizational goals.

Competency 3: To analyze, synthesize, think critically, solve problems, and make decisions

Students in the Master of Public Administration program at The University of Georgia will utilize various methods and analytical tools to analyze and interpret data to provide effective reasoning for decision-making and policy creation. Students will learn to effectively and concisely inform the public and other stakeholders of decisions and initiatives through the presentation of data and research findings. Furthermore, they will produce policy papers involving the synthesis of information, evaluation, and analysis of critical questions or problems currently facing the fields of public administration and policy.

Text

Rossi, Peter H., Mark W. Lipsey, and Gary T. Henry, *Evaluation: A Systematic Approach*, eighth edition, (Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications, 2019). ISBN - 978-1-5063-0788-6.

Additional reading assignments are listed in the class schedule and are available on UGA's eLC system.

Course Requirements

Attendance and Participation: Students are expected to attend each scheduled class meeting, to be on time, and to be prepared for each class session. A significant proportion of your final grade (see section on Grades) will be based on your instructor's assessment of your participation which includes attendance and participation in class discussions.

Students who are not feeling well should not attend class. Other reasons for missing class include the illness of immediate family members, official religious holidays, unforeseen crises, and legal or other obligations. Please inform your instructor by email if you are unable to attend class.

Evaluation Proposal Paper: Each student is required to develop a paper outlining a plan for one of the following types of evaluation:

1. A Needs Assessment – Identify a social condition that is problematic, define the problem and its extent, identify and describe the target population, and describe the nature of the public or nonprofit service needed to address the problem. Conclusions should be supported by data from a variety of sources that may include interviews, archived data, surveys, or focus groups.
2. An Evaluability Assessment – Identify a program, describe its underlying theory, assess that theory, identify possible outcomes, and determine the extent to which the impact of the program can be successfully examined.

3. A Process Analysis – Identify a program, describe its underlying theory, and determine the extent to which the program is being implemented in a manner consistent with the theory or logic model underlying it. Support your conclusions with interview data and program documents/records.
4. An Impact Assessment – Identify a program and specify a research design for assessing its impact. Discuss the strengths and weaknesses of the design in terms of internal and external validity and identify the data necessary for impact assessment including the measurement of key variables and the methods that will be used to collect those data.

Students may work alone or with one other student from our class as a partner on the paper project. The paper should be a minimum of 15 pages in length and is due on **December 7**. The paper must be submitted in MS Word format. Do not submit pdf files.

Student Presentations: Students will present and critique one evaluation study from those listed on the syllabus and marked with an asterisk. Students should work with partners on this assignment. Articles or chapters available for presentation are available on eLC. Presentations may be up to 20 minutes in length and should make use of PowerPoint slides, videos, or other media. Think of your presentation as an opportunity to inform the class (and your instructor) of the major points covered in the selected chapter or article. A written summary of your presentation should be distributed to everyone in class.

Final Examination: There will be a take-home final exam distributed on **November 30** and due by 7:00 pm on **December 14** by email to kellough@uga.edu. The completed exam must be submitted in MS Word format. Do not submit pdf files. The examination is designed to test your ability to understand and critically evaluate the reading, lecture, and discussion material covered in the course.

Grades

Grades are based on an evaluation of each of the class components weighted in the following manner:

<u>Course Component</u>	<u>Weight</u>
1. Attendance and Participation	15%
2. Evaluation Proposal Paper	35%
3. Student Presentations	15%
4. Final Exam	<u>35%</u>
	100%

Course Policies

Academic Honesty: Students must abide by the University of Georgia policy regarding academic honesty. All academic work must be performed without any form of cheating, lying, stealing, or

receiving assistance from any other person or using any source of information not appropriately authorized or attributed. The UGA Student Honor Code requires all students to commit to the following statement: “I will be academically honest in all of my academic work and will not tolerate academic dishonesty of others.” The University policy on academic honesty may be accessed at <http://www.uga.edu/honesty/>.

Computers, Cell Phones, and other Electronic Devices: You should bring a laptop computer to class, if you have one. You will find it useful for course work. You may, of course, also bring your cell phone, iPad, or other similar device. However, while you are in class, please refrain from using these devices for activities unrelated to course work.

Students with Disabilities: If you have a disability and would like to request specific accommodations, please contact your instructor. If you plan to request accommodations for a disability, please register with the UGA Disability Resource Center, 114 Clark Howell Hall, Athens, GA 30602. Phone: 706-542-8719, Email: drc@uga.edu.

Prohibition on Recording Lectures: In compliance with University of Georgia guidance, students may not make visual or audio recordings of any aspect of this course, unless they have written authorization from the UGA Disability Resource Center. Students who have a recording accommodation agree in writing that they:

1. Will use authorized recordings only for personal academic purposes during the specific course.
2. Understand that faculty members have copyright interests in their class lectures and agree not to infringe on these rights in any way.
3. Understand that the faculty member and students in the class have privacy rights and agree not to violate those rights by using recordings for any reason other than their own personal study.
4. Will not release, digitally upload, broadcast, transcribe, or otherwise share all or any part of the recordings. They also agree that they will not profit financially and will not allow others to benefit personally or financially from lecture recordings or other course materials.
5. Will erase/delete all recordings at the end of the semester.
6. Understand that violation of these terms may subject them to discipline under the Student Code of Conduct or subject them to liability under copyright laws.

Preferred Name and Pronouns: Professional courtesy and sensitivity are especially important with respect to individuals and topics dealing with differences of race, culture, religion, politics, sexual orientation, gender, gender variance, and nationalities. Class rosters are provided to the instructor with the student’s legal name. I am eager to address you by your preferred name and/or gender pronoun. Please advise me of this preference early in the semester so that I may make appropriate changes to my records.

CLASS SCHEDULE

August 17: INTRODUCTION TO THE COURSE AND TO PROGRAM EVALUATION

A review of course requirements... A look at the development of program evaluation and the types and functions of evaluation studies.

Rossi, Lipsey, and Henry, Chapter 1.

August 24: ASSESSING THE NEED FOR A PROGRAM

Consideration of issues associated with diagnosing social conditions and service needs.

Rossi, Lipsey, and Henry, Chapter 2.

*Buttram, Joan L., "Focus Groups: A Starting Point for Needs Assessment," *Evaluation Practice*, Vol 11, No. 3, (1990), pp. 207-212.

August 31: ASSESSING PROGRAM THEORY AND DESIGN

A discussion of program theories or logic models... consideration of subobjectives and outcomes.

Rossi, Lipsey, and Henry, Chapter 3.

*"Developing a Logic Model or Theory of Change," provided by the Community Tool Box, A Service of the Center for Community Health and Development, University of Kansas, available at: <https://ctb.ku.edu/en/table-of-contents/overview/models-for-community-health-and-development/logic-model-development/main>.

*Trevisan, Michael S., "Evaluability Assessment From 1986 to 2006," *American Journal of Evaluation*, Vol. 28, No. 3, (2007), pp. 290-303.

September 7: EVALUATING PROGRAM PROCESSES AND IMPLEMENTATION

Consideration of process evaluation and program monitoring. . . the concept of evaluability assessment.

Rossi, Lipsey, and Henry, Chapter 4 and 5.

- *Durlak, Joseph A. and Emily P. Dupre, “Implementation Matters: A Review of Research on the Influence of Implementation on Program Outcomes and the Factors Affecting Implementation,” *American Journal of Community Psychology*, Vol 41 (2008), pp. 327-350.

September 14: THE LOGIC OF IMPACT ANALYSIS

The nature of causality . . . the importance of the counterfactual . . . measuring outcomes
Rossi, Lipsey, and Henry, Chapter 6.

- *Gates, Emily and Lisa Dyson, (2017) “Implications of the Changing Conversation about Causality for Evaluators,” *American Journal of Evaluation*, Vol. 38, No. 1, pp. 29-46.
- *Mohr, Lawrence B., “The Qualitative Method of Impact Analysis,” *American Journal of Evaluation*, Vol. 20, No. 1, (1999), pp 69-84.

September 21: THE REGRESSION FRAMEWORK FOR IMPACT ANALYSIS

A review of regression analysis as a data analytic tool... Understanding how regression models are implicit in research designs... Using Excel to run simple regression models.

Mohr, Lawrence B., *Impact Analysis for Program Evaluation*, second edition, (Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications, 1995), Chapter 5.

Proud, Steven, Using Excel for Regression Analysis,
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SP5Ez7xiaKE>

September 28: NON-EXPERIMENTAL AND QUASI-EXPERIMENTAL DESIGNS

Understanding the strengths and weaknesses of research designs . . . internal and external validity

Rossi, Lipsey, and Henry, Chapter 7

- *Bingham, Richard D. and Claire L. Felbinger, *Evaluation in Practice: A Methodological Approach*, second edition, (New York: Chatham House Publishers, Seven Bridges Press, 2002), Chapter 8, “Pretest-Posttest Comparison Group Design.”
- *Leviton, Laura C. and Mathew D. Trujillo, (2017), “Interaction of Theory and Practice to Assess External Validity,” *Evaluation Review*, Vol. 41, No. 5, pp. 436-471.

October 5: TIME-SERIES DESIGNS

A review of designs that examine trends in a problem across time before and after a programmatic intervention

Rossi, Lipsey, and Henry, Chapter 7

*Bingham, Richard D. and Claire L. Felbinger, *Evaluation in Practice: A Methodological Approach*, second edition, (New York: Chatham House Publishers, Seven Bridges Press, 2002), Chapter Chapter 12, “The Simple Time-Series Design.”

October 12: TRUE EXPERIMENTAL DESIGNS

A review of the strengths and weaknesses of experimental and closely related designs for impact assessment.

Rossi, Lipsey, and Henry, Chapter 8

*Bingham, Richard D. and Claire L. Felbinger, *Evaluation in Practice: A Methodological Approach*, second edition, (New York: Chatham House Publishers, Seven Bridges Press, 2002), Chapter 7, “Posttest/Only Control Group Design.”

October 19: RESEARCH DESIGNS CLOSELY RELATED TO EXPERIMENTAL DESIGNS

A discussion of the regression discontinuity research design and difference-in-difference designs. . . interpreting findings from an impact analysis.

Rossi, Lipsey, and Henry, Chapter 9

October 26: THE ECONOMIC EFFICIENCY OF PROGRAMS

Comparing costs and benefits

Rossi, Lipsey, and Henry, Chapter 10

*Bingham, Richard D. and Claire L. Felbinger, *Evaluation in Practice: A Methodological Approach*, second edition, (New York: Chatham House Publishers, Seven Bridges Press, 2002), Chapter, Chapter 14, “Cost Effectiveness Analysis.”

November 2: PLANNING TO CONDUCT AN EVALUATION

Understanding how knowledge of subobjectives can strengthen assertions of causality... causal reasoning and qualitative impact analysis.

Rossi, Lipsey, and Henry, Chapter 11

*Mason, Sarah and Ashley Hunt (2018), "So What Do You Do? Exploring Evaluator Descriptions of Their Work," *American Journal of Evaluation*, Vol. 40, No. 3, pp. 395-413.

November 9: THE SOCIAL AND POLITICAL CONTEXT

Evaluating programs with multiple objectives and outcomes.

Rossi, Lipsey, and Henry, Chapter 12

*Perrin, Burt, (2019), "How to Manage Pressure to Change Reports: Should Evaluators Be Above Criticism?" *American Journal of Evaluation*, Vol. 40, No. 3, pp. 354-375.

November 16: PRESENTATION OF STUDENT PAPERS

November 30: PRESENTATION OF STUDENT PAPERS

Final Exam Distributed

December 7: Evaluation proposal papers due at 7:00 pm by email to kellough@uga.edu

December 14: Final Exam Due at 7:00 pm by email to kellough@uga.edu