

**PADP 4660 Program Evaluation**  
**University of Georgia**  
**Fall 2024**

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Course time: Tuesday & Thursday 11:10-12:25  
Course location: Baldwin Hall Rm 202  
Office hours: Mondays 1:30-2:30 **or by appointment**

**COURSE OVERVIEW AND OBJECTIVES**

The purpose of this course is to provide a broad understanding of program evaluation and develop the critical thinking skills needed to be a good “consumer” of program performance research data and reports. Program evaluation is a social science activity aimed at collecting, analyzing, interpreting, and communicating information about the effectiveness of social programs. While many different types of program evaluations will be discussed, this course will focus primarily on outcome and impact evaluations. The course will also focus on the real-world applications and implications of evaluation research.

The core objectives of this course are:

- 1) Identify and be able to describe the basic concepts and methods of evaluation research
- 2) Recognize and be able to explain both the importance of and inherent difficulties associated with evaluating government and nonprofit programs
- 3) Identify and explain the strengths and weaknesses associated with the different research designs and data collection strategies used to evaluate public programs and management interventions
- 4) Develop and use logic models
- 5) Design, explain and present an outcome/impact evaluation proposal for a program or management intervention

**Note: This syllabus provides a general plan for the course; deviations may become necessary as the semester progresses.**

**REQUIRED READINGS**

There are no required texts **BUT** there are required readings (available on the eLC or library website) that should be read **before** attending the class session for which they are assigned.

**ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION (8% OF GRADE)**

Given the technical nature of this course, attendance at every class meeting is especially important. Each class builds on material learned in previous class sessions and will often cover some important material not covered in the assigned readings. Students are expected to be in class (on time) as both attendance and participation will be considered in overall evaluations of performance. The instructor reserves the right to give quizzes in class to encourage or evaluate participation in the lectures/readings (no late or make-up quizzes will be allowed).

If you must miss a class, it is your responsibility 1) hand in assignments due prior to the beginning (late work will be penalized) and 2) to obtain notes and information about any assignments due the following week from another student.

## **COMPUTER, TABLET, CELL PHONE & OTHER DEVICE USE**

Laptop computers and tablets (i.e. iPads) may be used during class sessions for note taking ONLY. ANY instance of unapproved use of laptop computers or tablets in the classroom will result in your laptop/tablet privileges being revoked for the remainder of the semester. Cell phones and other electronic devices must remain off and stored out of sight at all times during class.

Prohibition on Recording Lectures. In the absence of written authorization from the UGA Disability Resource Center, students may not make a visual or audio recording of any aspect of this course. Students who have a recording accommodation (or are given access to recordings of course lectures by the professor) are expected to:

- ✓ Use the records only for personal academic use during the specific course.
- ✓ Understand that faculty members have copyright interest in their class lectures and that they agree not to infringe on this right in any way.
- ✓ 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.
- ✓ Not release, digitally upload, broadcast, transcribe, or otherwise share all or any part of the recordings.
- ✓ 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.

Explain and critically analyze alternative measures of outcomes and performance  
Explain the logic and key assumptions of several research designs

## **ACADEMIC HONESTY** (<https://ovpi.uga.edu/academic-honesty>)

As a University of Georgia student, you have agreed to abide by the University's academic honesty policy, "A Culture of Honesty," and the Student Honor Code. All academic work must meet the standards described in "A Culture of Honesty" found at: [www.uga.edu/honesty](http://www.uga.edu/honesty). Lack of knowledge of the academic honesty policy is not a reasonable explanation for a violation. Questions related to course assignments and the academic honesty policy should be directed to the instructor.

## **SPECIAL ACCOMMODATIONS**

Students with disabilities who require reasonable accommodations in order to participate in course activities or meet course requirements should contact the instructor and work with the Disability Resource Center (<http://drc.uga.edu/students/register-for-services>) to develop an accommodation plan. The student is responsible for providing a copy of that plan to the instructor.

Make-up exams and Incomplete or "I" grades are permitted in only extremely rare circumstances. The instructor has the right to (1) require documentation and proof of the need for the make-up exam or "I" grade (2) require the completion of different versions of assignments missed and/or (3) impose a grade penalty for a missed exam or Incomplete grade in the course. Please let the instructor know as soon as you see a problem developing. Any students wishing to withdraw from the course must follow the University's course withdrawal procedures.

***Last day to withdraw from full semester classes: October 21, 2024.***

## **EXAMINATIONS (20% MIDTERM + 12% FINAL = 32% OF GRADE)**

Two in-class examinations will be administered covering topics raised by the class lectures and readings. Students who cannot be in class on the scheduled examinations dates must talk with the instructor *prior* to the date in question. Failure to do so will result in a failing grade for the exam.

## **MEMO 1: PROGRAM NEED ASSESSMENT & THEORY PROPOSAL (10% OF GRADE)**

Students will work in small groups (2-3 students) to select a program of interest to them and submit a short description of the program/policy as well as the problem addressed by the program. The memo (no more than 2 pages single spaced, 12 point times roman font and 1 inch margins) should convincingly identify, describe and explain:

- What social issue/problem the program is trying to address?
- Why key stakeholders (policy makers, program funders and the public at large) should care about that issue/problem? What is the nature, magnitude and importance of the issue/problem (cite relevant numbers/sources as part of this argument)?
- What are the key activities/outputs of the program? What key outcomes does the program claim to produce and why should we think that such activities/output will produce such outcomes?
- Why key stakeholders (policy makers, program funders and the public at large) should support an evaluation of the program?

## **PRESENTATION 1: PROGRAM NEED ASSESSMENT & THEORY (10% OF GRADE)**

Each student group will be required to give a formal presentation of their Program Needs & Theory proposal. Presentations should be 8-10 minutes in length and should incorporate some use of visual aids (grades will reflect quality of content and presentation). The success of research proposal and findings are not solely dependent on the importance of the topic or the quality of their design and implementation. Often good research is ignored because the researcher(s) does not clearly and concisely communicate their work. Students are required to use PowerPoint for their presentation and a copy of their slides (in handout format) must be submitted at the time of their presentation.

## **MEMO 2: PROGRAM IMPACT EVALUATION PREPROPOSAL (10% OF GRADE)**

In addition to strengthening/revising and reframing the content from Memo 1 into a Program Impact Evaluation Proposal, this memo (no more than 2 pages single spaced, 12 point times roman font and 1 inch margins) must include:

- a logic model (as an attachment)
- Briefly describe what type of research design (experimental or quasiexperimental) to evaluate the program and explain the reasons for that choice

## **PRESENTATION 2: PROGRAM IMPACT EVALUATION FULL PROPOSAL (30% OF GRADE)**

Building on their previous memos and presentation, students will then develop and present a proposal for a full impact evaluation. Presentations should be 15-18 minutes in length and incorporate professional level visual aids (grades will reflect quality of content and presentation). Students are required to use PowerPoint for their presentation and a copy of their slides (in handout format) must be submitted at the time of their presentation. Prior to the final presentation, students must hand in a draft PowerPoint presentation for instructor review and feedback. The proposal presentation should discuss the following elements:

1. Program Needs Assessment
  - What social issue/problem the program is trying to address?
  - Why key stakeholders (policy makers, program funders and the public at large) should care about that issue/problem? What is the nature, magnitude and importance of the issue/problem (cite relevant numbers/sources as part of this argument)?
2. Outline of the theoretical framework or model
  - What are the key activities/outputs of the program? What key outcomes does the program claim to produce and why should we think that such activities/output will produce such outcomes?
3. Evaluation Research design
  - Study design and how it helps rule out alternative explanations
  - Identify study subjects (sample)/ units of analysis
  - Describe sampling procedure
  - Data collection methods (measures/instruments; operationalization)
4. Evaluation Management Plan
  - The time table
  - Budget
5. Evaluation strengths, weaknesses and benefits.
6. Program & Evaluation Ethical considerations

## GRADING

Any assignment (see above) not handed in at the beginning (in person) or before (if not in attendance) class on the day it is due will be penalized at least 1 letter grade. Grading penalties increase by 1 letter grade for additional each day an assignment is late.

Course grades will be determined according to the following criteria:

A	89.5-100	C+	75.0-79.49	F	0.0-58.99
B+	85.0-89.49	C	69.0-74.99		
B	79.5-84.99	D	59.0-68.99		

## CLASS SCHEDULE

- 8/15 Introduction to Program Evaluation
- 8/20 Government Program Goals and Performance Expectations  
Chapter 1 in Wholey, J. S., Hatry, H. P., & Newcomer, K. E. (2010). Handbook of Practical Program Evaluation. John Wiley & Sons. (available on eLC)
- 8/22 Program Performance Measures & their Implications
- 8/27 Program Need Assessments & Theories of Change  
Chapter 4 of Rossi, P. H., Lipsey, M. W., & Freeman, G. T. (2004). Evaluation: A systematic approach. Sage publications. (eLC)
- 8/29 Program Need Assessments & Theories of Change **\*\*Memo #1 Due\*\***  
Goldacre, B. (2009). *Bad Science*. London: Fourth Estate. Chapter 13.
- 9/3 Group Project Meetings
- 9/5 Group Project Meetings

- 9/10 **\*\*Program Need Assessment & Theory Presentations\*\***
- 9/12 **\*\*Program Need Assessment & Theory Presentations\*\***
- 9/17 Impact Evaluation & Experiments  
 Research methods for public administrators (7<sup>th</sup> Edition (2021) pp. 59-80)  
[https://galileo-uga.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/01GALI\\_UGA/1bvcvhk/alma9949420627902959](https://galileo-uga.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/01GALI_UGA/1bvcvhk/alma9949420627902959)
- 9/19 Impact Evaluation & Experiments  
 Spencer, M.B., Noll, E. & Cassidy, E. (2005). Monetary Incentives in Support of Academic Achievement. *Evaluation Review*, 29(3), 199-222.
- 9/24 Impact Evaluation & Quasi-Experiments Designs/Data  
 Research methods for public administrators (7<sup>th</sup> Edition (2021) pp. 80-92)  
[https://galileo-uga.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/01GALI\\_UGA/1bvcvhk/alma9949420627902959](https://galileo-uga.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/01GALI_UGA/1bvcvhk/alma9949420627902959)
- 9/29 Impact Evaluation & Quasi-Experiments Designs/Data  
 McCartt, A.T., Braver, E.R. & Geary, L. L. (2003). Drivers' use of handheld cell phones before and after New York state's cell phone law. *Preventive Medicine*, 36(5), 629-635.
- 10/1 **No Class**
- 10/3 **No Class**
- 10/8 Impact Evaluation & Cross-Sectional Designs/Data **\*\*Memo #2 Due\*\***  
 Research methods for public administrators (7<sup>th</sup> Edition (2021) pp. 30-35)  
[https://galileo-uga.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/01GALI\\_UGA/1bvcvhk/alma9949420627902959](https://galileo-uga.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/01GALI_UGA/1bvcvhk/alma9949420627902959)
- 10/10 Review and Compare Designs
- 10/15 **MIDTERM**
- 10/17 Surveys Sampling & Administration  
 Watch <https://youtu.be/be9e-Q-jC-0> & <https://youtu.be/fNqy2jMMewU>  
 Lange, J.E., Lauer, E.M. & Voas, R.B. (1999). A Survey of the San Diego-Tijuana Cross-Border Binging: Methods and Analysis. *Evaluation Review*, 23(4), 378-398.
- 10/22 Group Meetings
- 10/24 Group Meetings
- 10/29 Measurement
- 10/31 Survey Measurement  
 McDowall, D., Loftin, C., & Presser, S. (2000). Measuring civilian defensive firearm use: a methodological experiment. *Journal of Quantitative Criminology*, 16(1), 1-19.
- 11/5 Program Evaluation Ethics  
 Readings tba
- 11/7 Program Evaluation Ethics  
 Readings tba
- 11/12 Group Meetings
- 11/14 Group Meetings
- 11/19 **Program Impact Evaluation Proposal Presentations**
- 11/21 **Program Impact Evaluation Proposal Presentations**
- 11/26 **Program Impact Evaluation Proposal Presentations**
- 12/10 **\*\*12:00-3:00\*\* Final Exam**