



Public Affairs 804
Concepts and Methods of Program Evaluation
Winter 2010

Professor: Craig Boardman
Time/Room: M 1:30-3:48pm/Page Hall 040
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Office Hours: M 4:00-5:00pm and by appointment

Course Objectives

The purpose of this course is to enhance the student's understanding of program evaluation. The issues covered and skills acquired in this course will be of value in his/her role as a producer and consumer/initiator of evaluation research. By the end of the quarter, the student should:

1. Understand the conceptual, methodological, bureaucratic, political, ethical and organizational issues surrounding evaluation research;
2. Be competent to assess evaluation plans and research and;
3. Be able to design an evaluation study.
4. Think like a policy analyst.

Readings

The required book is available at SBX and from many online sources.

Carol H. Weiss (1997) *Evaluation, Second Edition*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.
(W)

There are a number of useful evaluation resources on the web. The Center for Social Research Methods (CSR) has a first-rate resource:

<http://www.socialresearchmethods.net>

Selected portions of the CSR's Knowledge Base are assigned below. In addition, some readings can be accessed through the e-journal (EJ) link on the OSU Library page:

<http://library.osu.edu>

Readings listed for each session must be completed *before* the session.

Class Procedures and Grading

A lecture/discussion mode will be employed. Grades will be determined as follows:

1. Two In-class Individual Application Assignments (each 18%) **36%**
 - The first is on January 25
 - The second is on March 8

2. Five In-class Group Application Assignments (each 3%) **15%**
 - No make-ups are available for these assignments. As the course has so few meetings, students should plan to attend all classes.

3. Posting Example & Critique of Design on Carmen **06%**
 - If your last name begins with A-I, you will be responsible for identifying, critiquing (specifically, how well the design addresses threats to internal validity and external validity), and posting on Carmen an example (provide a link or citation) of a study using an experimental design – due by 5PM Sunday *before* Session 4.
 - If your last name begins with J-R, you will be responsible for identifying, critiquing (specifically, how well the design addresses threats to internal validity and external validity), and posting on Carmen an example (provide a link or citation) of a study using a quasi-experimental design – due by 5PM Sunday *before* Session 6.
 - If your last name begins with S-Z, you will be responsible for identifying, critiquing (specifically, how well the design addresses threats to internal validity and external validity), and posting on Carmen an example (provide a link or citation) of a pre-experimental or non-experimental design – due by the 5PM Sunday *before* Session 7.

4. Completed Outcome/Impact Evaluation Design **43%**
 - Due date for outcome/impact designs: March 15 by 5:00pm in Carmen dropbox.
 - See the design guidelines document for further instruction.

The following grading scale will be used:

93 - 100 = A, 90 - 92.9 = A-, 87 - 89.9 = B+, 83 - 86.9 = B, 80 - 82.9 = B-,
77 - 79.9 = C+, 73 - 76.9 = C, 70 - 72.9 = C-, 67 - 69.9 = D+, 60 - 66.9 = D, <60 = E.

Class Outline

Session 1 (January 4): Introduction and Conceptual Issues in Evaluation Research

Readings:

- McLaughlin, John A. and Gretchen B. Jordan, 1999, "Logic Models: A Tool for Telling Your Program's Performance Story," *Evaluation and Program Planning* 22, 65-72. (EJ)
- Morell, Jonathan (December 2005). "Why Are There Unintended Consequences of Program Action, and What Are The Implications for Doing Evaluation?" *American Journal of Evaluation* 26 (4), 444-463. (EJ)
- W: Chs. 1-5,14

Lecture and Discussion Outline:

- I. Kinds and Purposes of Evaluation
- II. Logic Models
- III. Importance of the Evaluation Question(s)
- IV. Conceptual Issues Surrounding Outcome/Impact Evaluation Research
 - A. Who should conduct evaluation
 - B. Which programs should be evaluated (evaluability assessment)
 - C. Goals utilized in evaluation
 1. Whose
 2. Priority
 3. Temporal Dimension
 4. Ease of measurement
 5. Yardstick to interpret findings and address counterfactual
 - (a) performance of organization/unit in a previous period
 - (b) performance of similar organizations/units
 - (c) standards
 - (d) targets set prior to implementation
 - (e) other related programs
 - (f) local/state/national/international comparisons
 - D. Unintended Consequences

**Logic model and evaluation question group exercise (not graded)

**Yardstick group exercise (not graded)

Session 2 (January 11) and Session 3 (January 25): Methodological Issues in Outcome/Impact Evaluation, Part 1

Readings:

- W: Chs. 6-7
- CSR:

<http://www.socialresearchmethods.net/kb/reliabl.php>

<http://www.socialresearchmethods.net/kb/relandval.php>

<http://www.socialresearchmethods.net/kb/intval.htm>

<http://www.socialresearchmethods.net/kb/causeeff.php>

<http://www.socialresearchmethods.net/kb/intsing.php>

<http://www.socialresearchmethods.net/kb/regrmean.php>

<http://www.socialresearchmethods.net/kb/intmult.php>

<http://www.socialresearchmethods.net/kb/intsoc.php>

<http://www.socialresearchmethods.net/kb/external.php>

<http://www.socialresearchmethods.net/kb/measval.php>

<http://www.socialresearchmethods.net/kb/measlevl.php>

Lecture and Discussion Outline:

- V. Methodological Issues (with obvious overlap with conceptual issues)
 - A. Translation of goals into measurable objectives--reliability and validity issues
 - B. Inferring causality
 - C. Threats to internal and external validity

**Session 2 (January 11): Internal and external validity group exercise (not graded)

****SESSION 3 (JANUARY 25): LAST HOUR OF CLASS: IN-CLASS CLOSED BOOK, CLOSED NOTE INDIVIDUAL APPLICATION ASSIGNMENT – COVERING ONLY INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL VALIDITY**

Session 4 (February 1): Design of Outcome/Impact Evaluation Research: Experiments

Readings:

- W: Ch. 9
- CSR:

<http://www.socialresearchmethods.net/kb/design.htm>

<http://www.socialresearchmethods.net/kb/desexper.htm>

<http://www.socialresearchmethods.net/kb/expsimp.htm>

<http://www.socialresearchmethods.net/kb/expfact.htm>

<http://www.socialresearchmethods.net/kb/expblock.htm>

<http://www.socialresearchmethods.net/kb/exphybrd.htm>

Research Design Deliverables Due (before 1:30pm):

- **Email to me that (a) identifies the specific program you want to evaluate, (b) contains your specific evaluation question, and (c) identifies the specific dataset and source for that data with which you could implement your evaluation (boardman.10@osu.edu)**
- **List of the journals you will use for your literature review (Carmen dropbox)**

Lecture and Discussion Outline:

VI. Randomization and ethics of experimentation

VII. Designs

A. Experiments (in no particular order)

1. Classic Pretest-Posttest Control Group

R O X O

R O O

2. Delayed Treatment

R O X O

R O O X

3. No Preference Design

O X₁ O

R O X₁ O

R O X₂ O

O X₂ O

4. Intensive (or Minimal) Program Design

R X+ O

R X O

5. Posttest Only

R X O

R O

6. Solomon 4 Group Design

R O X O

R O O

R X O

R O

7. Factorial Designs

8. Randomized Block Design

****In-class Open Book, Open Note Group Application Assignment 1 – experiments**

Session 5 (February 8) and Session 6 (February 15): Design of Evaluation Research/Quasi-Experiments

Readings:

- W: Ch. 8
- CSR:

<http://www.socialresearchmethods.net/kb/quasiexp.htm>

<http://www.socialresearchmethods.net/kb/quasnegd.htm>

<http://www.socialresearchmethods.net/kb/quasird.htm>

<http://www.socialresearchmethods.net/kb/quasioth.htm>

Lecture and Discussion Outline:

B. Quasi-experiments (in no particular order)

1. Untreated Control Group Design with Pretest and Posttest

O X O
O O

2. Cohort Design

O
X O

3. Untreated Control Group Design with Pretest Measure at more than one time

O O X O
O O O

4. Interrupted Time Series

O O O O O O X O O O

5. Interrupted Time Series with a Nonequivalent, No Treatment Control Group Time Series

O O O O O O X O O O O
O O O O O O O O O O

6. Nonequivalent DV Design (single group)

O_{1A} X O_{2A}
O_{1B} O_{2B}

7. Untreated Control Group with Proxy Pretest Measure

O_{A1} X O_{B2}
O_{A1} O_{B2}

8. Untreated Control Group Design with Separate Pretest and Posttest Samples

N₁ O
N₁ X O
N₂ O
N₂ O

9. Removed Treatment Design with Pretest and Posttest (single group)

O X O O O

10. Repeated Treatment Design with Pretest and Posttest (single group)

O X O O X O

11. Regression Discontinuity Design

**In-class Open Book, Open Note Group Application Assignments 2 and 3 – both on quasi-experiments

Session 7 (February 22): Pre-experiments and Non-experiments

Readings:

- W: Chs. 11 and 13

Lecture and Discussion Outline:

- C. Preexperimental Designs (Case study, One Group Pretest-Posttest, Static Group)
- D. Nonexperimental Designs
- E. Qualitative Evaluation
- F. Statistical Controls

**In-class Open Book, Open Note Group Application Assignment 4 – non-experiments)

Session 8 (March 1): Review of Designs, Internal and External Validity

**In-class Open Book, Open Note Group Application Assignment 5 – experiments, quasi-experiments, internal and external validity

Session 9 (March 8): Student Critiques of Outcome/Impact Research Designs

Research Design Deliverable Due (Submit online to Carmen dropbox before 1:30pm and also bring to class in hard copy):

- **3 hard copies of a 1-page document listing:**
 - a) Your evaluation question(s) stated clearly and precisely.**
 - b) Your dataset identified, including the source**
 - c) Indication of key variables in your dataset, i.e., indication of how you will define and measure outcomes/impacts.**
 - d) Indication of how you will address the counterfactual (i.e., what would have happened in the program's absence) and the control variables you will use to reduce the nonequivalence of the treatment and comparison group(s).**
 - e) Indication of your evaluation design, using X and O notation.**

**SESSION 9 (MARCH 8): IN-CLASS CLOSED BOOK, CLOSED NOTE
INDIVIDUAL APPLICATION ASSIGNMENT – COVERING ALL DESIGNS,
INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL VALIDITY**

**MARCH 15 @ 5:00 PM: EVALUATION DESIGNS ARE DUE IN CARMEN
DROPBOX**

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The syllabus and evaluation research design guidelines for PPM 804 can be found on the School's website (<http://glennschool.osu.edu>) and on Carmen (<http://www.carmen.osu.edu>).

THIS MATERIAL IS AVAILABLE IN ALTERNATIVE FORMATS UPON REQUEST. PLEASE CONTACT THE SCHOOL'S OFFICE AT 614-292-8696 FOR ASSISTANCE. STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR MAKING THEIR NEEDS KNOWN AND FOR SEEKING THE AVAILABLE ASSISTANCE IN A TIMELY MANNER.