Syllabus
EDCP 789J -- Prevention and Treatment Program Development and Evaluation
Fall 2009

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Room & Time: Tawes Room 0207, Wednesdays 4:15 - 7:00 p.m.

Course Description and Broad Objectives

Program evaluation—as viewed in this seminar—is about what happens with what outcomes (and sometimes of what worth and at what cost) when prevention, treatment, social, educational, health, public safety or other interventions are put into practice in the real world. Although it has much in common with other forms of research, program evaluation differs from much behavioral and social science research in that its practitioners interact with program implementers and other stakeholders in the research and must conduct their research in messy real-world settings. Program development—as viewed in this seminar—is about the design of interventions in schools, correctional agencies, policing settings, other organizations, or communities; and the anticipation and solution of problems that tend to thwart full and faithful implementation of program plans. Unlike basic researchers, program development and evaluation researchers are practitioners in the sense that they interact with and often intend to influence the programs they study. Like practitioners in other behavioral science-related fields, evaluation practitioners are often concerned with helping program developers or implementers (a) set goals, (b) clarify and make the ideas undergirding an intervention more rational, realistic, or defensible, (c) understand obstacles that may thwart the attainment of desired outcomes and to develop plans or practices that will promote the achievement of these outcomes, (d) measure success or progress towards program goals, and (e) generate confident conclusions about the efficacy or effectiveness of practices. Because most “programs” are implemented by organizations, program evaluation shares some features with the practice of organization development. The competent practice of program evaluation generally requires knowledge and skills in behavioral science theory and research, research design, the measurement of outcomes and program implementation, survey and data management competencies, facility in techniques of organization development, ethical practice, and cost analysis. This course is titled program evaluation research and development to emphasize and endorse this interactive approach to program research.

Examples will be based on research problems in education, public health, prevention and treatment, delinquency, criminal justice, and industrial/organizational psychology.

Class will meet weekly to discuss topics in program development and evaluation and review assigned readings. In addition to completing assigned readings, students will be required to (a)
write and present in the seminar a critique of a program evaluation in their own field of specialization, (b) present formal discussions (discussant role) of other students’ presentations, (c) participate in exercises applying or practicing skills and turn in brief written reports on these exercises, (d) actively participate in all meeting discussions, and (e) take a final integrative exam.

**Required Reading**


Additional readings are also required for some topics. Students are *required* to read these items, which are indicated by asterisks (*) in the course schedule. These readings will be discussed during class meetings. Each student will also serve as discussant for two presentations by other students; and will be required to read the original article on which the presentation is based.

Recommended or supplemental readings are also indicated in the course schedule. The supplemental readings are not required, but diligent or interested students will often want to consult them. These supplemental readings are indicated by daggers (†) in the course schedule. Classic items included among the readings are indicated by double daggers (‡).

Complete citations to required and supplemental readings are provided as the last section of this document. Many of the supplemental readings provide good, bad, or ugly examples of program evaluation research. Participants may wish to select program evaluations to critique from among these supplemental readings, but participants are certainly not limited to these examples. Additional optional readings may be suggested from time to time, and participants are invited to recommend readings as well.

**Learning Structure**

Class meeting time will be devoted to (a) discussion of the required readings (which should have been completed before the meeting), (b) clarifications by the instructor of key concepts and issues related to the week’s topics, (c) exercises to gain skill in the application of program development and evaluation methods and tools and participant oral reports on experience the application of these skills, (d) student presentations on prior published program evaluations or of their own planned program development and evaluation project, and (e) discussions of these student presentations. Active participation in these meetings is *required*. Students are encouraged to assist each other in understanding the subject matter and in completing the exercises, but each individual student must personally complete each exercise and other assignment.

Exercises are intended to allow students to develop and display skills required for program development and evaluation research. Some exercises will take place in class; others will require that participants complete and prepare presentations out of class for in-class presentations. These
exercises will be graded.

Each student will make a presentation about a published evaluation research study or an original plan for program development and evaluation, describing the background of knowledge providing a context for the program and research on it, the research question(s), method(s), sample(s), results, and implications for program improvement. In this presentation, the student will lead members of the seminar in a critique of the study, focusing on limitations, applications, and implications of the research. These presentations will be graded. Presentations should include handouts for all seminar participants or the equivalent of Power Point summaries. Seminar participants will critique the presentations and suggest improvements, extensions, or alternative approaches. For each student presentation, two students will be specifically assigned the role of discussant. Discussants should carefully read the evaluations being critiqued in the main presentation, be prepared to lead a discussion of strengths and weaknesses in the original evaluation study that may have been overlooked in the main presentation, or suggest alternative interpretations or points of view about the study. Discussants will provide a note (a page or two) of written advice to the presenter on points to consider in revising the presentation for the written report. Performance in the discussant role will contribute to the course grade.

A formal written version of the critique or plan for original study is required. This must be prepared in APA style (Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, 6th Edition). Students must adhere to the page limits specified.

Evaluation Criteria

The course is graded A to F. Grades will be based on the following: (a) exercise write-ups, 20%; (b) classroom presentation of evaluation critique, 15%; (c) discussant role and note on revision advice, 5%; (d) evaluation critique write-up, 20%; and (d) final examination, 40%. (See the schedule below for a breakdown of the point distribution for exercise write-ups.) The grading scale will be 90-100% of possible points = A, 80-89% = B, 70-79% = C, 60-69% = D, < 60% = F. The instructor reserves the possibility of adjusting the percentage ranges downward (not upward).

A grade of incomplete is available only for work which has been of passing quality throughout the term in circumstances in which there is good reason the work cannot be completed and with the approval of the instructor. Students should discuss anticipated obstacles in a timely fashion (not at the end of the term).

Disability Accommodations

If you have a documented disability and would like for me to consider special learning accommodations, please let me know as soon as possible.

Academic Integrity Policy
The University has approved a Code of Academic Integrity (available at http://www.shc.umd.edu/code.html). The Code prohibits students from cheating on exams, plagiarizing, submitting the same paper for credit in two courses without authorization, buying papers, submitting fraudulent documents, and forging signatures. The Code is administered by a Student Honor Council, which strives to promote a “community of trust” on the College Park campus. Allegations of academic dishonesty can be reported directly to the Honor Council (314-8206) by any member of the campus community. Students are required to avoid plagiarism, which is defined on the Honor Council Web site (http://www.shc.umd.edu/whatis.html) as follows:

Plagiarism
"Intentionally or knowingly representing the words or areas of another as one's own in academic exercise."

* Information that is obtained in one's reading or research, which is not common knowledge among students in the course, must be acknowledged.
  o Direct Quotation: Every direct quotation must be identified by quotation marks or by appropriate indentation and must be promptly cited. . . .
  o Paraphrase: Immediate acknowledgement is required when material from another source is paraphrased or summarized, in whole or part, in your own words. Paraphrasing is not reordering words in a sentence.
* Textbooks and handouts are not considered common knowledge.

Commitment to Multiculturalism

The instructor is committed to creating a multicultural training environment in which individuals’ diversity and opinions are respected. Students are expected to contribute their unique perspectives to this effort by considering and raising issues related to multiculturalism and diversity—and respecting others’ outlooks throughout this course.

Seminar Etiquette

Contributing to the work of the group is a responsibility of each participant in the seminar. Cell phones and messaging devices should be turned off during meetings. Actively engaging in discussions is a responsibility; checking e-mail, surfing the Web or similar activities are disrespectful of others who are leading or facilitating discussions. Computers may be used for taking notes, referring to notes on current topics, or presenting material; but they should not be used to engage in off-topic activity.

Policy on Religious Holidays

The University policy “Assignments and Attendance on Dates of Religious Observance” provides that students should not be penalized because of observances of
their religious beliefs; students shall be given an opportunity, whenever feasible, to make up within a reasonable time any academic assignment that is missed due to individual participation in religious observances.

CourseEvalUM Fall 2009

Participation in the evaluation of courses through CourseEvalUM is the student’s responsibility as a member of our academic community. This feedback is confidential and important to the improvement of teaching and learning at the University as well as to the tenure and promotion process. CourseEvalUM will be open for fall semester course evaluations between Tuesday, December 1 and Sunday, December 13. Please go directly to the website (www.courseevalum.umd.edu) to complete the evaluations starting December 1. By completing all evaluations each semester, students will have the privilege of accessing online, at Testudo, the evaluation reports for the thousands of courses for which 70% or more students submitted their evaluations.

Schedule of Topics, Exercises, and Readings

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<th>Session</th>
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<th>Exercise or Performance</th>
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<tr>
<td>2 9 Sept</td>
<td>Planning program evaluations  • Purposes  • Stage of program development  • Types of evaluation-related inquiry</td>
<td>Oral presentations on personal interests in PD&amp;E. Assignment: Identifying evaluation questions and approaches appropriate for stage of intervention program development. Due 16 Sept, 1 point.</td>
<td>*Rossi et al. (Ch 2) *G. Gottfredson (2000)</td>
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| 4 23 Sept | Formulating evaluation questions | Oral presentations on organizational influences. Developing “logic models” for programs. *Assignment:* Develop and explain a logic model for a program of interest to you. Due 30 Sept, 4 points. | *Rossi et al. (Ch 3)*  
*G. Gottfredson et al. (1999)* |
| 5 30 Sept | Needs assessment | Oral presentations of logic models and evidence of need for program. *Assignment:* Summarize data justifying need for an intervention. Due 7 Oct, 2 points. | *Rossi et al. (Ch 4)*  
*McKillip (1998)*  
†G. Gottfredson (1990)* |
| 6 7 Oct | Eliciting and using theory in intervention planning & implementation | Oral presentations of needs analysis. Specifying intervention theory. *Assignment:* Specify and justify a theory of action for an intervention program of interest to you, 3 points. Due 14 Oct. | *Rossi et al. (Ch 5)*  
*G. Gottfredson et al. (1999)*  
*Kazdin (2008)*  
†Coie et al. (1993)*  
†Scarr (1985)* |
| 7 14 Oct | Selecting interventions; Measuring and improving program implementation | Oral presentations of theory of action. *Assignment:* Setting implementation standards, 1 point. Due 21 Oct. | *Rossi et al. (Ch 6)*  
*G. Gottfredson (1996)*  
*Berger et al. (2009)*  
*D. Gottfredson et al. (2005)*  
*Jaffe (2008)*  
†G. Gottfredson et al. (2002)*  
†Webster-Stratton (2001)* |
| 8 21 Oct | Measuring outcomes | Oral presentations of implementation standards. *Assignment:* Using intervention theory to develop outcome measures, 1 point. Due 28 Oct. | *Rossi et al. (Ch 7)*  
*Ferguson (2009)*  
†Shadish, Cook, & Campbell (2002, Ch 3)*  
†Webb et al. (1981)*  
†Lipsey (1990, Ch 5 & 6)* |
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| 9       | Randomized field experiments & units of assignment in field trials; statistical power issues. | Oral presentations on outcome measures.  
*Assignment:* Conducting random assignment and anticipating obstacles, 1 point. Due 4 Nov. | *Rossi et al.* (Ch 8)  
†Cohen (1988)  
†Conduct Problem Prevention Group (2002)  
†Dishon & Andrews (1995)  
†Ellickson & Bell (1990)  
†Ellickson et al. (1993)  
†Finn & Achilles (1999)  
†D. Gottfredson et al. (2006)  
†Olds et al. (1998)  
†Sherman & Weisburd (1995)  
†Schochet (2005)  
†Wagenaar et al. (2000) |
| 10      | Quasi-experimental evaluation designs; understanding regression artifacts. | Oral presentation on random assignment.  
*Sign up for presentation date and provision of citation for original evaluation study to discussants and other seminar participants.* | *Rossi et al.* (Ch 9)  
†Bloom (2003)  
†Esbensen & Osgood (1999)  
†Flay et al. (2001)  
†G. Gottfredson et al. (2002)  
†Maltz et al. (1980)  
†Morehouse & Tobler (2000)  
†Reid et al. (1999)  
†Shadish et al. (2002) |
| 11      | Doing the difficult: Helping implementers develop better programs and better evaluations. Using force-field analysis to increase the feasibility of plausible interventions and credible designs. | *Assignment:* In interaction with individuals experienced in the relevant field, conduct a force-field analysis on implementing a randomized experiment. Identify critical benchmarks. Due 18 Nov, 4 points. | *G. Gottfredson* (2002)  
*Boruch et al.* (2000)  
†Coalition for Evidence-Based Policy (2003) |
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| 12 18 Nov | Program effects, effect sizes, significance, alternatives to NHST, meta-analysis | Oral reports on FFA for random trial. *Assignment:* Estimating effect sizes and confidence intervals. (Different individuals estimate different types of CI or ES.) Due 2 Dec, 1 point. *Participant presentations and critiques of published evaluation research or plans for original program development and evaluation.* | *Rossi et al. (Ch 10)*  
*Schmidt (1996)*  
†Hunter (1997)  
†Lipsey (1990, Ch 2)  
†Lipsey & Wilson (1998)  
†Hunter & Schmidt (1996)  
†Wilson et al. (2001) |
| 13 25 Nov | No meeting. Work on written critique of a published program evaluation. | | ‡Strunk & White (1918/2000) |
| 13 2 Dec | Program costs; social and political context of evaluation research | Turn in spreadsheets or calculation worksheets for CI & ES. *Participant presentations and critiques of published evaluation research or plans for original program development and evaluation.* | *Rossi et al. (Ch 11 & Ch 12)*  
*Flay et al. (2005)*  
‡Campbell & Russo (1999)  
†Ehrenberg et al. (2001)  
†Committee on Improving Anti-Crime Programs (2005)  
†Mark (2001)  
†Yates (1986) |
| 14 9 Dec | Program development and evaluation as practiced. | Review. *Final written report of a critique of a published evaluation or original plan for program development and evaluation due.* | *Rossi et al., Glossary*  
*Gottfredson et al. (1999, Glossary)*  
Catch up on reading if you have fallen behind or review material as necessary. |

Comprehensive final examination will take place in the time and at the place scheduled by the University as published in Testudo. See Testudo for the date, time, and location.
Readings


Bloom, H. S. (2004). Randomizing groups to evaluate place-based trials. Available on the W. T. Grant Foundation web site: http://www.wtgrantfoundation.org/info-url_nocat3040/info-url_nocat_show.htm?doc_id=225435&attrib_id=9485 Explains the unit of assignment and unit of analysis problem, with power considerations, for randomized trials in which schools (or other units such as courts or police departments) are the unit of assignment.


Even if reductions in class size increase achievement, are they worth what they cost compared to other ways to increase achievement?


A good example of a multi-site evaluation.


Longer-term outcomes of the above.


An important evaluation with a relatively weak design.


Experimental study of the effects of class size.


A quasi-experimental evaluation.


Consensus of a Society for Prevention Research Task Force on reasonable standards relating to program evidence and readiness of programs for dissemination.


Some examples, briefly described.


A quasi-experimental evaluation.


Another quasi-experimental evaluation in a very difficult place to conduct any kind of research.


A true experiment, under difficult circumstances, of a program widely claimed on the basis of weak evidence to be more effective than it seems based on these results.


Random assignmet in the evaluation of a popular criminal justice intervention.


An old plea for doing better evaluations.

A systematic way of thinking about the process of program development and evaluation.

An experiment in secondary schools.

A training resource for learning about and practicing needs assessment. Includes learning cases.

The straight dope on what really happened at Hawthorne.

Sometimes, people in organizations don’t want the news. Here is an interpretation of one circumstance in which this occurs.

A way to think about where in the process of development a specific program may be.

An introduction and rationale for an approach to helping people in an organization see ways to do things they didn’t think they could do.


A quasi-experimental evaluation under difficult circumstances.

Lots of things to worry about in conducting program development and evaluation.

Why significance testing is largely misguided.

The importance of meta-analysis as a way of accumulating knowledge.

Illustrates how fundamental research can be used to specify intervention design standards (e.g., spacing of instruction).

Suggests, among other things, a focus on mechanism of change in clinical research with implications for practice.

An introduction to the method.
Avoiding malpractice in evaluation research.

An example of a meta-analysis.

How a commonly used poor design misleads the unwary.

Prognostication regarding evaluation research.

A whole issue in which different eminent individuals in the evaluation field prognosticate about the future.

A useful overview of issues in needs assessment. The remainder of the volume in which this chapter is published is also something program evaluators should read.

An example of an evaluation with problems.

An influential evaluation of an apparently effective intervention.


An example of an evaluation.

Your textbook.

Organizational obstacles to increasing effectiveness.

How our ideas about plausible interventions do, and ought to, change.

A catalog of some organizational features in an organization where better evaluations are often needed.

Useful conceptual and practical framework for power planning form randomized experiments where the site (school, police department, etc.) is the unit of assignment.

An alternative to significance testing we should all adopt.


Monumental contribution to the way we should think about designing evaluations of programs and policies.


An example of an experiment.


Another example.


Don’t overlook ideas for unobtrusive measures.


An example of an evaluation.


Why people have difficulty in getting going on ambitious interventions, and how to approach overwhelming problems.


An example of a meta-analysis.


You may find this guide useful.


Introduction to cost analysis.