

ST. LOUIS UNIVERSITY
DEPT. OF WOMEN'S AND GENDER STUDIES

PROGRAM EVALUATION
WGST 5050-01; POLS 5850-01

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Monday, 4:20-6:50 p.m.
3 credit hours
Spring 2017

Office hours: Before or after class or by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES

This course covers both the theory and methods of program evaluation. It will provide students with a basic understanding of the approaches and techniques social scientists use to evaluate human service programs. Attention will also be given to the social and political contexts within which social programs operate and are evaluated. To reflect on and engage with the process of program evaluation, students will work in teams during the semester to design an evaluation plan that can be implemented by a local human service agency or educational program.

As an applied process of inquiry, program evaluation involves drawing conclusions about both an empirical state of affairs (that something is the case) and the worth or value of a program. The latter, normative (value) feature distinguishes evaluation from other types of inquiry, such as basic science research, clinical epidemiology, or public polling. A judgment of the merit and worth of a program is based on explicit and/or implicit values that underlie every step of the research process. This course will bring a feminist lens to the evaluation process, asking questions about the degree to which biases based on gender, race, social class, sexuality, and other dimensions of diversity affect our identification of what is to be evaluated, the development of evaluation questions, and the collection, analysis, interpretation, and utilization of data. By explicitly linking values to issues of power, the course will examine how program evaluation has and can be used to either hinder or promote social justice.

At the end of this course, students should be able to:

- Distinguish between needs assessments, process evaluations, and outcome evaluations;
- Summarize the differences between experiments, quasi-experiments, and case study research designs as well as evaluate the strengths and weakness of each;
- Explain the role of theory in evaluation;
- Discuss and give examples of political and ethical issues in program evaluation; and
- Apply practical program evaluation skills to human service programs, including those in social change agencies .

PREREQUISITES

There are no prerequisites for this course.

TEXTS

The following required texts are available in the university's bookstore:

- Peter H. Rossi, Mark W. Lipsey, and Howard E. Freeman, *Evaluation: A Systematic Approach*, 7th edition. Sage Publications, 2004.
- Michael Quinn Patton, *Utilization-Focused Evaluation*, 4th edition. Sage Publications, 2008.
- Michael Quinn Patton, *How to Use Qualitative Methods in Evaluation*. Sage Publications, 1987.
- Robert K. Yin, *Case Study Research: Design and Methods*, 5th edition. Sage Publications, 2014.
- There are additional assigned articles. Most are available through the e-journal portal on the Pius Library website and some (indicated by *) are on Blackboard.

TEACHING AND LEARNING METHODS

Class attendance required: It is important to attend each class meeting so that you remain engaged with the course material, discussions, and project. If you must miss any classes, please contact the instructor .

Class participation and preparation: Since the class periods will be primarily discussion based, your substantial, consistent, and thoughtful contributions to class discussion (as both a speaker and a listener) are essential. I will use participation in class discussions as a factor in deciding borderline grades for the course.

METHODS OF EVALUATION

Your final grade in this course will be determined as follows:

10% class participation. This course is a graduate seminar. All members of the class will be expected to attend class each week, have read the assigned material, and participate in the class discussions.

5% discussion questions. By 9:00 a.m. the morning of each class, email to me one point of interest and one corresponding open-ended discussion question about each of approximately two of the assigned readings (we will designate readings for each student during the previous class period). I will grade these credit/no credit. Here are some ideas to help you get started:

Points of interest

- Something in the reading that stood out to you, surprised you, or resonated with your experience;
- Something that connects with things you have learned in this or other courses;
- Something in the reading that you want a deeper understanding about;

- Something that has implications for your evaluation proposal.

Open-ended questions: In general, these are questions that begin with the words What, Why, and How. Good questions will:

- Ask the class to reflect on the point of interest;
- Invite the class to think critically;
- Invite the class to think independently and creatively;
- Allow for students to express opinions based on what was read.

40% midterm exam. There will be an in-class midterm exam given late in the semester. The exam will be comprised of essay questions covering the assigned readings, class discussions, and student projects. Students will be given a copy of the exam questions at least 10 days before the exam.

45% evaluation proposal. At the end of the semester, each student will submit an evaluation plan that can be implemented by a local human service program. (Detailed instructions are at the end of this syllabus.) I will assign you to work in teams of 3-4 students during the semester on this project. Your final proposal may be collectively written or you may write it alone. Students who turn in a collectively-written final proposal will all receive the same grade.

OTHER COURSE POLICIES

Academic Integrity and Honesty

The University is a community of learning, whose effectiveness requires an environment of mutual trust and integrity. Academic integrity is violated by any dishonesty such as soliciting, receiving, or providing any unauthorized assistance in the completion of work submitted toward academic credit. While not all forms of academic dishonesty can be listed here, examples include copying from another student, copying from a book or class notes during a closed book exam, submitting materials authored by or revised by another person as the student's own work, copying a passage or text directly from a published source without appropriately citing or recognizing that source, taking a test or doing an assignment or other academic work for another student, securing or supplying in advance a copy of an examination without the knowledge or consent of the instructor, and colluding with another student or students to engage in academic dishonesty.

Any clear violation of academic integrity will be met with appropriate sanctions. Possible sanctions for violation of academic integrity may include, but are not limited to, assignment of a failing grade in a course, disciplinary probation, suspension, and dismissal from the University. Students should review the College of Arts and Sciences policy on Academic Honesty, which can be accessed on-line at <http://www.slu.edu/x12657.xml> under "Student Resources" or in hard copy form in the Arts and Sciences Policy Binder in each departmental or College office.

Title IX Nondiscrimination Policy

Saint Louis University and its faculty are committed to supporting our students and seeking an environment that is free of bias, discrimination, and harassment. If you have encountered any form of sexual misconduct (e.g. sexual assault, sexual harassment, stalking, domestic or dating

violence), we encourage you to report this to the University. If you speak with a faculty member about an incident of misconduct, that faculty member must notify SLU's Title IX coordinator, Anna R. Kratky (DuBourg Hall, room 36; akratky@slu.edu; 314-977-3886) and share the basic fact of your experience with her. The Title IX coordinator will then be available to assist you in understanding all of your options and in connecting you with all possible resources on and off campus.

If you wish to speak with a confidential source, you may contact the counselors at the University Counseling Center at 314-977-TALK. To view SLU's sexual misconduct policy and for resources, please visit the following web address: <http://www.slu.edu/general-counsel-home/office-of-institutional-equity-and-diversity/sexual-misconduct-policy> www.slu.edu/here4you .

Students with Special Needs

In recognition that people learn in a variety of ways and that learning is influenced by multiple factors (e.g., prior experience, study skills, learning disability), resources to support student success are available on campus. Students who think they might benefit from these resources can find out more about:

- Course-level support (e.g., faculty member, departmental resources, etc.) by asking your course instructor.
- University-level support (e.g., tutoring/writing services, Disability Services) by visiting the Student Success Center (BSC 331) or by going to www.slu.edu/success.

Students who believe that, due to a disability, they could benefit from academic accommodations are encouraged to contact Disability Services at 314-977-8885 or visit the Student Success Center. Confidentiality will be observed in all inquiries.

Writing Center

I encourage you to take advantage of the writing services in the Student Success Center; getting feedback benefits writers at all skill levels. Trained writing consultants can help with any writing, multimedia project, or oral presentation. During the one-on-one consultations, you can work on everything from brainstorming and developing ideas to crafting strong sentences and documenting sources. These services do fill up, so make an appointment early! For more information, or to make, change, or cancel an appointment, call 977-3484 or visit <http://www.slu.edu/writingservices.xml>.

COURSE OUTLINE

This syllabus is subject to change at the discretion of the instructor to accommodate instructional and/or student needs. Any changes will be announced at the beginning of the regularly scheduled class periods.

CLASS TOPICS AND READINGS

(Blackboard items are indicated with an asterisk. Unless otherwise noted, "Patton" refers to the *Utilization-Focused Evaluation* book.)

January 23: Introduction to the course; Utilization-focused evaluation

Rossi et al, Ch. 1, "An Overview of Program Evaluation"

Patton, Ch. 1, "Evaluation Use: Both Challenge and Mandate"

Patton, Ch. 2: "What Is Utilization-Focused Evaluation?"

Patton, Ch. 3: "Fostering Intended Use by Intended Users: The Personal Factor"

Patton, Ch. 4: "Intended Use of Findings"

January 30: Political and ethical issues in program evaluation

Patton, Ch. 14: "Power, Politics, and Ethics"

*Robert E. Stake, "Advocacy in Evaluation: A Necessary Evil?" in *Evaluation for the 21st Century*, eds. Eleanor Chelimsky and William R. Shadish (Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Sage Publications, 1997).

*Donna M. Mertens and Nichole Steward, "The Feminist Practice of Program Evaluation," in *Feminist Research Practice: A Primer*, 2nd ed. edited by Sharlene Nagy Hesse-Biber (Los Angeles: Sage Publications, 2014), pp. 337-58 (NOTE: begin with section entitled, "Principles of Feminist Evaluation").

*Melanie Shepard and Ellen Pence, eds., *Coordinating Community Responses to Domestic Violence: Lessons from Duluth and Beyond* (Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Sage Publications, 1999), pp. 3-4 (written by Pence and Shepard) and pp. 34-40 (written by Pence).

*Michael Scriven, "Truth and Objectivity in Evaluation," in *Evaluation for the 21st Century*, eds. Eleanor Chelimsky and William R. Shadish (Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Sage Publications, 1997).

February 6: Program theory and goals; Evaluability

Rossi et al., Ch. 3: "Identifying Issues and Formulating Questions"

Rossi et al., Ch. 5: "Expressing and Assessing Program Theory"

Patton, Ch. 7: "Focusing on Outcomes: Beyond the Goals Clarification Game"

Patton, Ch. 8: "Evaluation Focus Options: Development Evaluation and Other Alternatives"

*Melanie F. Shepard, "Evaluating a Coordinated Community Response," in Melanie Shepard and Ellen Pence, eds., *Coordinating Community Responses to Domestic Violence: Lessons from Duluth and Beyond* (Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Sage Publications, 1999), pp.169-91.

February 13: Methodological issues (quantitative vs. qualitative)

Patton, Ch. 11: "Evaluations Worth Using: Utilization-Focused Methods Decisions"

Patton, Ch. 12: "The Paradigms Debate and a Utilization-Focused Synthesis"

Mark Waysman and Riki Savaya, "Mixed Method Evaluation: A Case Study," *Evaluation Practice* 18: 227-37 (1997).

February 20: Needs assessment; Program planning

Rossi et al., Ch. 4: "Assessing the Need for a Program"

Yi-Fang Lee, James W. Altschuld, and Jeffrey L. White, "Effects of Multiple Stakeholders in Identifying and Interpreting Perceived Needs," in *Evaluation and Program Planning* 30(1): 1-9 (2007).

Basha Silverman, Joanna Champney, Sara-Ann Steber, and Cynthia Zubritsky, "Collaborating for Consensus: Considerations for Convening Coalition Stakeholders to Promote a Gender-based Approach to Addressing the Health Needs of Sex Workers," *Evaluation and Program Planning* 51: 17-26 (2015).

*Jack McKillip, Katie Moirs, and Christine Cervenka, "Asking Open-ended Consumer Questions to Aid Program Planning," *Evaluation and Program Planning* 15: 1-6 (1992).

February 27: Program monitoring and implementation assessment

Eva Lantos Rezmovic, "Assessing Treatment Implementation Amid the Slings and Arrows of Reality," *Evaluation Review* 8(2): 187-204 (1984).

Patton, Ch. 9: "Implementation Evaluation: What Happened in the Program?"

Rossi et al., Ch. 6: "Assessing and Monitoring Program Process"

Sarah Dufour, Danielle Lessard, and Claire Chamberland, "Facilitators and Barriers to Implementation of the AIDES Initiative, a Social Innovation for Participative Assessment of Children in Need and for Coordination of Services," *Evaluation and Program Planning* 47: 64-70 (2014).

March 6: Outcome evaluation strategies; Experimental designs

Patton, Ch. 10: "Conceptualizing the Intervention: Alternatives for Evaluating Theories of Change"

Rossi et al., Ch. 7: "Measuring and Monitoring Program Outcomes"

Rossi et al., Ch. 8: "Assessing Program Impact: Randomized Field Experiments"

John M. MacDonald, Andrew R. Morral, Barbara Raymong, and Christine Eibner, "The Efficacy of the Rio Hondo DUI Court: A 2-year Field Experiment," *Evaluation Review*, 31(1): 4-23 (2007).

PRELIMINARY PROJECT ANALYSIS DUE (group paper)

March 13: No class (Spring break)

March 20: Outcome evaluation: Quasi-experiments; Program effects

Rossi et al., Ch. 9: "Assessing Program Impact: Alternative Designs"

Rossi et al., Ch. 10: "Detecting, Interpreting, and Analyzing Program Effects"

Leona S. Aiken, et al., "Comparison of a Randomized and Two Quasi-Experimental Designs in a Single Outcome Evaluation," *Evaluation Review* 22(2): 207-44 (1998).

*Lawrence H. Gard, et al., "Evaluation of a Single Presentation Format for Education about Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV Disease)," *Journal of Applied Social Psychology* 21(12): 1034-38 (1991).

March 27: Outcome evaluation: Qualitative methods

Michael Quinn Patton, *How to Use Qualitative Methods in Evaluation*, Chs. 1, 2, 3, 6, and 7

*Lawrence B. Mohr, excerpt from *Impact Analysis for Program Evaluation*, 2nd ed. (Thousand Oaks, Calif: Sage Publications, 1995), pp. 259-273

Rebecca A. Lee and J.C.M. Shute, "An Approach to Naturalistic Evaluation," in *Evaluation Review* 15(2): 254-65 (1991).

April 3: Case study research

Yin, chs. 1, 2, 5

Joel H. Brown and Marianne D'Emidio Caston, "On Becoming 'At Risk' Through Drug Education: How Symbolic Policies and Their Practices Affect Students," in *Evaluation Review* 19(4): 451-92 (1995).

April 10: Midterm exam

In-class essay exam

April 17: No class (Easter break)

April 24: Efficiency evaluations; Cost-outcome analysis

Rossi et al., Ch. 11, "Measuring Efficiency"

Michael A. Campion and Carol L. McClelland, "Interdisciplinary Examination of the Costs and Benefits of Enlarged Jobs: A Job Design Quasi-Experiment," in *Journal of Applied Psychology* 76, no. 2 (1991).

Tara Gray, et al., "Using Cost-Benefit Analysis to Evaluate Correctional Sentences," in *Evaluation Review* 15(4): 471-481 (1991).

Andrejs Skaburskis, "Cost-Benefit Analysis: Ethics and Problem Boundaries," in *Evaluation Review* 11(5): 591-611 (1987).

May 1: Evaluation reports; Utilization

Patton, ch. 13, "The Meanings and Reporting of Evaluation Findings: Analysis, Interpretation, Judgment, and Recommendations."

Andreas Balthasar, "Institutional Design and Utilization of Evaluation: A Contribution to a Theory of Evaluation Influence Based on Swiss Experience," *Evaluation Review* 33(3): 226-256 (2009).

DRAFT OF EVALUATION PROPOSAL DUE

May 8: Student reports

In-class presentations of students' evaluation proposals

Monday, May 15, 4:20 p.m.

FINAL DRAFT OF EVALUATION PROPOSAL DUE

PROGRAM EVALUATION PROJECT

The evaluation project will consist of two parts: a Preliminary Project Analysis that will examine the various interests, politics, and potential ethical issues of the program and/or your proposed evaluation of it; and the Evaluation Proposal itself. You will work in student teams to write the Preliminary Project Analysis and to design the Evaluation Proposal. You may work either in teams or individually to write the final Evaluation Proposal.

The Preliminary Project Analysis should be written to demonstrate to the instructor that you have carefully considered certain issues in the early stages of the project. This report will not be sent to the client program. The following outline describes the topics that you should cover. This information should be collected through discussion with program staff, analysis of program literature, and student team meetings.

Preliminary Project Analysis

A. Describe the program and the problem it addresses. (Some of the information that you present in this section may be used again when you write up the Evaluation Proposal.)

1. Briefly describe the program, the problem it addresses, and the solution it provides.
2. Describe the services offered (or that are being considered). Who is/will be served by whom, how, and when?
3. Identify the various stakeholders and the interests of each.
4. Describe the geographic, political, economic, and social contexts of the program.
5. Describe the program personnel and its clients.
6. Describe the history of the program.
7. Describe the history of the problem, if it is relevant.
8. Describe any theory or model upon which the program (or proposed solution to the problem) is based.

B. Stakeholder interests. Describe the interests of the various program stakeholders and the relationships among those interests. (Again, some of the information collected in this section may be used for the Evaluation Proposal itself.)

1. Who wants the evaluation?
2. What type of evaluation is desired (e.g., formative, summative, need assessment, process evaluation, outcome evaluation, evaluation of efficiency, etc.)?
3. Why is the evaluation desired?
4. Who will see the results and how will the results be used?
5. When is the evaluation desired?
6. What type of resources are available for the evaluation?
7. Provide a list of questions that the evaluation will address. (*This is very important.*)

C. Assess the evaluability of the program. Be sure to touch on the following questions and topics:

1. Can/should this program be evaluated? Why or why not?
2. What are some potential sources of resistance to this evaluation and/or the use of its results? How could you solve some of these problems if you decided to conduct this evaluation?
3. Discuss the expectations of the various stakeholders and describe how they contribute to the evaluability issues.

D. Ethics of the evaluation. Discuss and present solutions to any ethical problems that might arise in your evaluation plan. Include all of the following that apply as well as additional issues you anticipate:

1. Protection of the people studied and the stakeholders.
2. Threats to the scientific quality of the evaluation.
3. The varying needs of the stakeholders.
4. Potential negative side effects.

E. Diversity issues. Are you familiar with the culture or sub-cultures of the client and stakeholder groups? If not, what types of special preparation will/would you need in order to plan and conduct the evaluation?

The Evaluation Proposal will describe your plan to meet the research needs of the evaluation's users. A final copy of the evaluation proposal will be submitted to the client and to the course instructor.

I suggest that you include all the items below unless there is good reason not to. However, you do not need to slavishly follow the order of items in this outline--do what makes the most sense and is the most reader-friendly. Be conscious of your presentation: organize and compose your plan so that it is likely to be used by the client. Although you want to convey the information in an efficient manner, pay attention to stylistic considerations: try to make the topics flow one after another, and when possible use transition paragraphs to smooth out the shifts from topic to topic.

Evaluation Proposal

A. Title page with the name of the author(s), a separate listing of all the members of the evaluation team, the title of the proposal, the name of the program, the date, and a footnote indicating that the proposal was submitted in partial fulfillment of requirements for this program evaluation course.

B. Table of contents, including the headings and subheadings presented in the proposal.

C. Description of the program and problem.

1. Describe the program, the problem it is designed to address, and the proposed solution.
2. Describe the services being offered (or that are being considered). Who will be served by whom, how, and when?

D. Goals and objectives of the program.

1. Describe in detail the goals and objectives of the program.
2. List the evaluation questions that are being asked and defend them either in terms of the program's goals or some other rationale.

E. Literature review. Do a *brief* review of the evaluation literature and any other literature related to your topic. Include answers to the following questions:

1. Are there any examples of similar program evaluations in the literature? If so, describe them.
2. What methods have been used in similar program evaluation projects?
3. What was found with which populations and programs?

F. Methodology or work plan. Write a detailed description of the methodologies that you will use to answer all your evaluation questions. (This should be the longest and most detailed section of your proposal.) Include the following:

1. Describe the research design(s) or qualitative protocol that you will use.
2. Describe the population and samples from which you will collect data.
3. Describe any quantitative instruments (including demographic sheets) that will be used. Describe the reliability and validity of all instruments. Include an example of each in an appendix if they are available.
4. If you are planning to use open-ended interviews or some other qualitative data collection procedures, provide the questions that will be asked.
5. Describe the procedure by which the data will be collected. Discuss who will be responsible for each activity.
6. Describe how the data will be analyzed. Discuss as much about specific qualitative or statistical analysis procedures as you are able.

G. Describe how the results will be conveyed to each of the stakeholders.

1. Will there be a feedback session? If so, who will attend and what will happen at that session?

H. Budget

1. Describe how many people will be needed for each activity in F and G above.
2. Describe what each person's activities will be and how many days they will contribute to the evaluation.
3. Include summaries of the amount of money each person will be paid per day and a total salary per individual and task.
4. Determine rough travel expenses and supply expenditures.
5. Summarize the total budget in a table.

I. Bibliography