

**UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE
COLLEGE OF SOCIAL WORK**

SW 547 - Evaluation Research

Course Outline

Fall 2007

Instructor: Cynthia Rocha, Ph.D.

Class: Thursday 12:30-3:20

Office hours: Wednesday 2:30-3:30,

Thursday 3:30-4:30 & by appt.

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Course Requirements:

A. Readings

Basic texts have been selected and readings are listed in the bibliography. In addition to assigned articles, students are encouraged to read from the recommended selections and independently from the professional journals.

B. Assignments and Evaluation

The course grade will be based on a combination of papers and projects conducted at your field placement.

Evaluation critique:	25%
Field Evaluation proposal:	25%
Final Paper	35%
Class Presentation	10%
Lab Attendance & Part.	5%

Grading Scale

A =	90-100
B+=	87-89
B=	80-86
C+=	77-79
C=	70-76
D+=	67-69
D=	60-66
F=	<60

Text:

Required:

Posavac, Emile & Carey, Raymond. (2003). Program Evaluation : Methods and Case Studies, 6th edition, New Jersey: Prentice Hall.

Optional Texts:

Rubin, A. & Babbie, E. (2005). Research Methods for Social Work. (5th ed.) Brooks/Cole Pub.

Project Evaluation Criteria: Find an evaluation problem in your field placement.

Criteria for Evaluation Proposal

1. Research Problem (20 pts.)

Select a program evaluation research problem which is of interest and concern to you. You may choose community needs assessment, monitoring of program implementation, outcome assessment, or other programmatic or managerial issues to address the problem.

- What is your programmatic problem? Who is affected? How?
- What type of evaluation will you use to study this problem?
- Explain why the type of evaluation method you chose is the best to study the problem.

2. Description of the agency (25 pts.)

Briefly describe the setting in which the study will take place.

**Chapter two in Schalock provides an outline which is worthwhile to read. I will have copies made for you.

- *the problem addressed by program
- *target population
- *services provided
- *evaluation context-general social and economic context in community
- *Expected Outcomes
- *justification (you don't need this one-it is encompassed in your lit review above)

3. Justify the need to conduct this study with appropriate literature review. (25 pts.)

Your lit review should assist you in developing your research questions.

- What has been done in the past?
- What is known and not known?
- What will drive your study?
 - *Program goals and objectives?
 - *Theoretical or conceptual assumptions of program?
why the program thinks their intervention will be successful.

4. Develop a set of evaluation hypotheses or research questions which you will use to guide and/or test in your study. (20 pts.)

- base this either on your program objectives and/or on the literature.

5. Technical aspects of the paper (10 pts.)
 - APA style
 - Headings, page numbers, spelling, grammar

Criteria for final paper

Attach revised first paper to second paper. (10 pts.)

1. Methods (20 pts.)
 - A. Sample
 - What kind of sampling technique did you use?
 - What was the sample size?
 - How representative to the program population is your sample?
 - B. Data Collection Techniques
 - C. Design
 - What type of design was utilized?
 - Any internal/external validity issues that need to be discussed? (e.g. attrition)
2. Measurement (20 pts.)
 - A. What were your variables?
 - either list the variables, or if they were specifically delineated to control, independent/intervention and dependent/outcome, discuss this.
 - B. How were your variables operationalized?
 - Discuss definitions and level of measurement here.(may want to create a table)
 - C. Are there any measurement reliability and validity issues that should be discussed?
3. Type of analysis (10 pts.)
 - A. What type of analysis did you use? (eg. frequencies, means, etc.)
 - B. What statistical test were employed, if any?
4. Outcome (10 pts.)
 - A. What were the results of the evaluation?
 - B. What were any problems that were encountered?
 - C. Limitations of the study.
5. Discussion (10 pts.)
 - A. What are the implications of the results?
 - B. What recommendations do you have for the program?
6. Tables and graphs (10 pts.)
 - Attach any tables and graphs which help the reader understand the analysis and refer to these throughout the discussion.
7. Technical issues (10 pts.)
 - Page numbers, headings, spelling, grammar, APA style.

Class Presentation

1. Why you have done this study, based on literature and program goals. (25 pts.)
What type of evaluation did you do?
2. Research Questions or Hypotheses (15 pts.)
Short synopsis of: (15 pts.)
 3. Data Collection and Sampling Technique, Design used
 4. Variables, defined and operationalized
 5. Type of Analysis
6. Results, using handouts for the class and instructor (25 pts.)
7. Discussion and recommendations

Students may critique either of the following articles:

Chen, H.T., Bersani, C., Myers, S.C. & Denton, R. (1989) Evaluating the effectiveness of a court sponsored abuser treatment program. Journal of Family Violence, 4(4), 309-322.

Marsh, J.D. & Wirick, Molly A. (1991). Evaluation of Hull House teen pregnancy and parenting program. Evaluation and Program Planning, 14, 49-61.

Criteria for Critique: This can be done in outline form. Feel Free to work in pairs.

1. Purpose of the evaluation (10 pts)
Type of Evaluation
What are the research questions or hypotheses?
2. Theory or program driven (10 pts)
Is the evaluation theory driven or program driven?
If the evaluation is driven by the objectives of the program, what are the objectives?
What are the underlying assumptions of the evaluation?
3. Methods (20 pts)
Sample
Units of analysis
sample size and type
representativeness
Data Collection Techniques
Design
Type of design
internal, external validity issues

4. Measurement (20 pts)

Level of measurement (may want to create a table for this section).

Variables

What are the independent/experimental/treatment variables?

What are the dependent/outcome variables?

Do they have controls?

How are variables operationalized? (create table, for major variables only)

Any discussion of measurement reliability/validity

5. Type of analysis (10 pts.)

Statistical tests employed?

6. Outcomes (20 pts.)

Results of study

Problems they saw with study

Problems you see that they did not

Discrepancies, things that didn't make sense

Any ethical issues?

7. Technical aspects of your paper (10 pts)

APA style, Spelling, grammar, headings, page numbers.

Readings and Outline:

Class one

Introduction to Evaluative Research
Structure of the course
Understanding Evaluative Research

Class two

Purpose of Evaluative Research
History and Theories of Evaluation
Overview of Evaluation Research in Social Work

Readings:

Posavac, Chapter one: Program Evaluation: An Overview

Reichardt, C. S. & Rallis, S. F. (Eds.) (1994). Relationship between the qualitative and quantitative research traditions. In The qualitative-quantitative debate: New perspectives, New Directions for Program Evaluation, 61. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Gabor, P. & Grinnell, Jr., R. M. (1994). Should program decisions be based on empirical evidence of effectiveness? Yes. In W. W. Hudson & Nurius, P. S. (Eds.), Controversial issues in social work research. Boston. Allyn and Bacon.

Taber, (1994). Should program decisions be based on empirical evidence of effectiveness? NO. In W. W. Hudson & Nurius, P. S. (Eds.), Controversial issues in social work research. Boston. Allyn and Bacon.

Class Three

Types of Evaluation
Determining Community Needs and Organizational Goals
Conducting an evaluability assessment
Conceptualizing and operationalizing program goals and objectives
Conducting a Community needs assessment
What is Participatory Action Research?
Increasing Empowerment and Reducing Oppression: The Antidiscrimination Principle

Readings:

Posavac, Chapter 3, Selecting Criteria and Setting Standards

Chapter 6, The Assessment of Need

Gaventa, J. (1988). Participatory Research in North America, *Convergence*, XXI (2/3), 19-28.

Class four

Types of Evaluation, continued
Monitoring (process)

Program outcomes, impacts
Cost benefit and cost effectiveness analyses

Readings:

Posavac, Chapter 7, Monitoring the Operation of Programs
Chapter 9, Quasi-Experimental Approaches to Outcome
Chapter 11, Analysis of Costs and Outcomes

Class five

Research questions and evaluative hypotheses
Theory and Literature Review

Readings:

Posavac, Chapter 3, Selecting Criteria and Setting Standards
Review Rubin & Babbie, Chapter 5: Problem Formulation

Class six

Research Designs for Evaluative Research
Cross-sectional, exploratory and qualitative designs
Pre, quasi and experimental designs
Internal and external validity

Readings:

Posavac, Chapters 9 and 10, Using Experiments to Evaluate programs
Review Rubin & Babbie, Ch. 10 and 11, Causal Inference

EVALUATION PROPOSAL DUE

Class seven

Review, units of analysis, variables, levels of measurement
Sampling and Data Collection
Secondary and primary data
Interviews, surveys, telephone

Readings:

Posavac, Chapter four, Developing Measures
Review Rubin, A. & Babbie, E. Review Chapters 6 & 8, Measurement & Sampling
Review Rubin and Babbie, Chapters 9 & 15, Survey and Unobtrusive Data Collection

Class eight: Fall Break, No class!

Class nine

Measurement, continued

Advanced measurement techniques:

standardized scales and survey questionnaires

Reliability and measurement validity

Understanding systematic bias against diverse groups: ethnic, gender, SES, and sexual orientation as a source of systematic bias.

Readings:

Review Rubin and Babbie Chapter 7, Constructing Instruments

Class ten ARTICLE CRITIQUE DUE

Data Management

Data entry

Micro Computer Lab

Readings:

Peruse Rubin & Babbie, Chapter 18 & 19, Processing Data and Interpreting Descriptive Statistics

Class eleven

Continue, Data Entry

Data Coding & Cleaning

Class twelve

Data Analysis

Preparing, entering, and manipulating evaluation research data using a microcomputer.

Graphic and tabular presentation of evaluation research data

Readings:

Peruse Rubin and Babbie, Chapter 20 & 21, Inferential Data Analysis

Class thirteen

Computer Lab

Data analysis, continues

Descriptive stats, averages, percentages, cross tabs

Understanding chi square, correlation, T-tests

Class fourteen- No class - Thanksgiving!

Class fifteen Short presentations due today.

Interpreting and communicating findings

Ethical Issues in Social Work Education-NASW Code of Ethics

Political and organizational factors involved in planning, conducting, and interpretation of evaluating research

Professional guidelines for the ethical conduct of evaluation research

Avoiding bias and understanding the perspectives of minority and disadvantaged groups:

Economic, gender, minority, sexual orientation, biases.

Readings:

Posavac, Chapter 5, Ethics in Program Evaluation

 Chapter 13, Evaluation Reports: Interpreting & Communicating Findings

 Chapter 14, How to Encourage Utilization.

NASW Code of Ethics in Research (Handout)

FINAL PAPERS DUE: Friday December 1, 5:00 p.m.

Supplemental Readings

- Edelhoc, M. (1999). Welfare reform in South Carolina: "Roughly right" social policy. *Social Policy (Spring)*.
- James Neff & W. Zule, (2000). A Development of a Measure of Treatment Readiness for Out of Treatment Drug Users: Psychometric Properties and Construct Validity@. Substance Use and Misuse, 35: 585-599.
- Michael Quinn Patton (1997). Utilization-Focused Evaluation, California: Sage Publications, 3rd Edition .
- Parrott, S. (1998). Welfare recipients who find jobs: What do we know about their employment and earnings? Washington, DC: Center on Budget and Policy Priorities.
- Pavetti, L., Olson, K., Nightingale, D., Duke, A. & Isaacs, J. (1998). Welfare to Work Options for Families Facing Personal and Family Challenges: Rationale and Program Strategies. Washington, D.C.: The Urban Institute.
- Peter Rossi and Howard Freeman. (1999). *Evaluation: A Systematic Approach*, 6th Edition, California: Sage Publications.
- Rocha, C.J. & Kabalka, L.E. (1999). A comparison study of access to health care under a Medicaid managed care program. *Health and Social Work*, 24 (3), 169-179.
- Rocha, C. & Strand, E. (2004). The effects of economic policies and employment assistance programs on the well-being of displaced female apparel workers. *Journal of Family Issues*, 25 (4), 542-566.
- V. Slonim-Nevo and Y. Anson. (1998). A Evaluating Practice: Does it Improve Treatment Outcome@. *Social Work Research* 22: 66-74. 1998.

Related Journals

Evaluation Review (was called
Evaluation Quarterly)
Evaluation Research
Harvard Business Review

Social Service Review
Evaluation and Program Planning
Evaluation Studies Review Annual
Journal of Policy Analysis and Management