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Course: CPIA Evaluate Impact  
MPA 816 Quantitative Program Evaluation Winter 2021

Version: January 14, 2021

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Weekly live session (attendance mandatory)	Tuesdays at 2pm on Zoom ( <a href="#">Link</a> / Meeting ID: 924 6819 6513, Passcode: 163055)
Office hours	Group office hours will be joint with MA 841 on Fridays at 10am on Zoom ( <a href="#">Link</a> / Meeting ID: 943 9795 7121, Passcode: 486335)
Teaching assistants	Ardyn Nordstrom: <a href="mailto:ardyn.nordstrom@queensu.ca">ardyn.nordstrom@queensu.ca</a>
Additional TA office hours	By appointment. Please email the TAs to arrange a virtual appointment.

## Delivery Method

- Online delivery platform: Queen’s University OnQ
- Delivery method: A combination of pre-recorded asynchronous lecture videos, plus a mandatory weekly live session on Tuesdays at 2pm to discuss the weekly discussion question.
- Office hours: In addition to the mandatory live sessions on Tuesdays, there are also *optional* office hours to assist with any technical issues that arise in access to onQ, or to discuss specific assignments in greater detail. We expect to have the ability to switch the meeting to private one-on-one conversations should students have confidential questions. The office hours will begin promptly at 10am on Friday and up to an hour, depending on attendance and questions.

# Grading Scheme and Requirements

The course includes weekly recap quizzes due every Monday, as well as weekly discussion activities that will be discussed during the mandatory weekly live session. Refer to the detailed table below to find the deadlines for each week's activities.

- Short weekly quizzes on lecture materials: 15%
- Short discussion activities: 15%
- Semester-long "best-fit evaluation" assignment building into paper and short (recorded) presentation: 35%
- Scheduled final exam: 35%

The live sessions on Tuesday are mandatory for MPA students. PMPA or CPIA students who cannot regularly attend the live sessions can reweight the 15% from discussion activities evenly across the other three activities. Students must pass (i.e. 60+) on both the final and best-fit evaluation assignments to pass the class.

## Late or Missing Deliverables

- Participation in the weekly live session on Tuesdays is mandatory. However, if needed you are allowed two unexcused absences during the term without penalty.
- You can miss up to one of the first two Best Fit Evaluation Design project subparts without penalty. If you choose not to submit one of the subparts the weight will be reallocated to the final BFE design (part III) submission. We recommend not missing these assignments so that you can get feedback before the final paper.
- All late assignments are subject to a 10pp penalty for each day they are late without a formal request for accommodation.
- At the end of the term, your two weekly quizzes with the lowest scores will be dropped.

## Readings

Throughout the semester, we will be assigning recommended readings from online sources, as well as from two recommended books:

1. [The Goldilocks Challenge: Right-Fit Evidence for the Social Sector](#), by Gugerty and Karlan
2. Either of the following options by Angrist and Pischke:
  - [Mastering Metrics](#) (less technical option)
  - [Mostly Harmless Econometrics](#) (more technical option)

We recommend purchasing the Goldilocks Challenge as well as one of the other two books. For most people without a strong background in statistics, we recommend Mastering Metrics rather than Mostly Harmless.

## Course Outline

Week Start Date	Topic
w1: Jan 11- Jan 17	1. Overview of Impact Evaluation
w2: Jan 18- Jan 24	2. Measuring Impact I: RCT Experiments
w3: Jan 25 - Jan 31	3. Measuring Impact II: Alternative Approaches to Causal Analysis
w4: Feb 1 - Feb 7	4. Measuring Impact III: Samples and Selection
w5: Feb 8 - Feb 14	5. Stats Week: Sample sizes, comparisons, and regressions
Feb 15 - Feb 21	Reading Week
w6: Feb 22 - Feb 28	6. Instruments, Ethics, and Inclusive Evaluation
w7: Mar 1 - Mar 7	7. Mixed Methods Evaluation
w8: Mar 8 - Mar 14	8. Best Fit Program Evaluation Design
w9: Mar 15 - Mar 21	9. Macroeconomic Impacts of Policy Changes
w10: Mar 22 - Mar 28	10. Evidence driven funding allocation and Result Based Financing (From Grants to Impact Bonds)
w11: Mar 29 - Apr 4	11. Risk Analysis
w12: Apr 5 - Apr 11	12. Big Picture: Design, Cost Benefit Analysis, and Results Based Financing

Where feasible, we will post each week's pre-recorded lectures online well enough in advance such that you will have 12 days to complete each week's lectures before the quiz is due. This will allow you flexibility in deciding when to complete the work.

# Due Dates

The best-fit evaluation (BFE) assignment will involve three submissions.

1. BFE Assignment #1, due Feb 3 during week 4 of the class
2. BFE Assignment #2, due Mar 3 during week 7 of the class
3. BFE Assignment #3 (including final paper and pre-recorded presentation), due Apr 4 during week 11 of the class

A weekly quiz is due the MONDAY FOLLOWING each week's lecture material. Thus, the week 1 quiz is on Jan 18, the week 2 quiz is on Jan 25, and so on. Two exceptions: the week 5 quiz is due Feb 22 and the week 12 quiz is due Apr 11. You are also expected to prepare for the discussion activities announced each week.

The final exam date is TBD.