Professional Masters in Public Administration (PMPA)
School of Policy Studies, Queen's University

MPA 888 Program Evaluation

Office Hours and Contact Information

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May 1 to May 7, 2021 – 2:00pm to 4:00pm (Synchronous class time)

Course Description:

The purpose of the course is to familiarize students with the major issues in the fields of program evaluation. Students will develop an understanding of the theoretical frameworks used for evaluative research, validity issues in evaluative research, and the multi-methods, theory-driven approach to evaluation.

The course begins with an overview of the process through which policies and programs are considered, developed, approved, implemented and evaluated. Evaluation research can be expensive, difficult, rarely conclusive, and politically unpopular. Still evaluation research is of increasing relevance in an era where economy, efficiency and effectiveness are integral to the delivery of public sector services. The new emphasis on results, coupled with a shift to contracting out, partnerships, and special operating agencies has increased the need for evaluation.

The major types of evaluations will be considered, including: formative, process and summative evaluation, economic evaluation, and performance measurement. A major focus in the course will be evaluation design and delivery in a climate of evolving citizen and political expectations regarding public services.

The evaluation process does not, however, take place in a vacuum. Issues and externalities such as professional judgment, ethics and objectivity, public expectation, and political sensitivities can (and do) have profound impact on the process. Understanding of and strategies to cope with these issues will be a key part of this course.

Course Objectives:

After completing this course, you will be able to:

- Think critically and solve problems about the challenges of program implementation, improvements and accountability that you may face, in the public or non-profit sectors
- Frame performance / accountability issues in analytical and policy terms
- Understand performance monitoring and program evaluation in their different purposes, methods, and relationships
- Explore and understand the key differences between alternative empirical methods commonly used in program evaluation
- Discuss the uses and limitations of ongoing performance information and periodic evaluations in policy decision-making
- Plan, develop, present and negotiate the terms of a simple program evaluation as group work to a non-technical authority
- Carry out a simple evaluation

Source Materials:

A combination of articles, book chapters and handouts will be used. The assigned readings will be made available in web-accessible electronic journals at Queen;s University, or directly through the Internet (indicated below in url's provided). The course outline below is in draft and the final full list of readings will be provided at the start of the course.

Resource Materials:

Required Texts

Howlett, M., Ramesh, M. & Perl, A. (2009) Studying public policy: Policy cycles & policy subcycles (3rd ed.) Don Mills ON.: Oxford

Mc David, J., Huse, I. and Hawthorn, L. (2013) *Program Evaluation and Performance Measurement: an introduction to the practice (2nd Ed.).* Thousand Oaks, California: Sage

Other

Treasury Board of Canada, Secretariat (1998) *Program Evaluation Methods: Measurement and Attribution of Program Results. Third Edition* downloadable file:
http://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/pol/doc-eng.aspx?id=12309§ion=text

And Treasury Board evaluation standards
http://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/eval/pubs/pubs-to-1995/stand-normes-e.asp

W.K. Kellogg Foundation Logic Model Development Guide
http://www.wkkf.org/Pubs/Tools/Evaluation/Pub3669.pdf

Case Studies

Additional readings and case studies will also be posted on the class website.

Report of the Auditor General of Canada (2002) *Costs of Implementing the Canadian Firearms Program.* Chapter Ten which can be accessed at:
http://www.oag-bvg.gc.ca/internet/English/osh_20030224_e_23380.html

Supplemental references

Pal, L. (2010) Beyond Policy Analysis: public issue management in turbulent times (4th ed.). Chapters 1 – 4, Toronto: Nelson

Other downloadable references

Literature Review - Study on the Function of Evaluation Focusing on Results: A Guide to Performance Measurement)
http://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/eval/stud_etud/func-fonc-02_e.asp

Evaluation Standards for the Government of Canada – Appendix B
http://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/pubs_pol/dcgpubs/tbm_161/ep-pe1_e.asp

User-Friendly Handbook for Mixes Method Evaluation
http://www.nsf.gov/pubs/1997/nsf97153/start.htm

Evaluation – A Beginners Guide
http://web.amnesty.org/802568F7005C4453/0/2173DDD1E48C37BA802569A500545572?Open&Highlight=2,evaluation

Course format:

This course involves a combination of lecture/seminar, case analysis, and project simulation. The course consists of readings from the literature as well as individual and team assignments designed to do three things: reinforce learning of key concepts and methods; utilize that learning in the critique of actual case studies; and simulate the monitoring and evaluation work. These will be presented and discussed at the class sessions.

As we only have 2 hours per class of synchronous time together I will be supplementing class lectures with asynchronous recorded material. At this time, I am unsure if I will be posting the recorded material on our ON-Q class site or setting up a special YouTube channel for this purpose.

Evaluation:

Topic	Mark (%)
Program Logic Model – case study application	**20**
Review of an evaluation	**20**
Program evaluation proposal	**40**
Class participation/ case studies	**20**
TOTAL	**100**

Program Logic Model – case study application. Each student will select/identify a program case study at end of class on May 1st. Your assignment will be to evaluate the overall design and effectiveness of the evaluation using the techniques inherent in the Program Logic Model, due December 1st.

Review of an evaluation. Each student will be provided with a published evaluation, at the conclusion of class on May 5th. Your assignment is to critique the evaluation on the basis of design, validity threats, conclusions and recommendations.

Program evaluation proposal. Each student will develop a proposal to evaluate a program of the student's choice. The proposal will include any/all elements from the class, and be of a quality that could be implemented in the student's respective workplace. more details will follow in class. *This assignment is due June 14th, but that timeline may move.*

Class participation. At the graduate level the basic expectations in any course include attendance, completion in advance of all assigned readings, and participation in classroom discussions. Given the collapsed timelines for our synchronous classes case studies this term will be a verbal report and discussion – not a written hand in.

As a guide to grading the instructor uses the following measurement: Consistent Top Quality Contributions - 85 % or above; Good Level of Participation - 75 to 84 %; Spoke But Contributed Little - 65 to 74 %; Spoke Sporadically - 50 to 64 %; Rarely Participated - 0 to 49 %.

Deadlines:
As deadlines are of the essence to performance monitoring and evaluation – observing the "expiry date" of requested information should be part of your training and discipline. This is true of individual and group assignments. Unless the assignment indicates otherwise (e.g. seminar memos one day prior to class), written responses to homework assignments are due at the beginning of class on the due date, and must be on paper with the pages neatly stapled together, and identified with the student's name and student number. Unless there is a valid (e.g. medical) excuse, assignments will not be accepted more than one class late, and late assignments will be given a 20% penalty. Students are encouraged to work together on individual assignments, but the work handed in must be the student's own. For group assignments, in addition to the overall

group presentation, students are to submit a write-up of their understanding of the project and their personal contributions to its development.

Class Schedule:

Module	Participants	Date	Readings	
Introduction Course Outline What is evaluation research and how do we apply it to programs and policies?		May 1	Mc David et al (2013), Chapters 1 – 2 Pal (2010), Chapters 1 – 2	
Key Concepts and Issues in Program Evaluation Key Concepts Program Evaluation Process Policy Cycles	Causation Discussion		Shriven (2004), *Causation* Grasso (2003), *What makes an evaluation useful*	
Program Logic Model Introduction to Logic models		May 2	Mc David et al (2013), Chapter 3 W.K. Kellogg Foundation Logic Model Development Guide	
Program Logic Model (Cont'd) Design and Use Limitations	Case study presentation	May 3	The Canadian Firearms Program: a case study	
Research Designs for Program Evaluation What is Research Design? Validity Performance Measure Key issues in Evaluation	Project Logic Model due	May 4	Mc David et al., (2013), Chapters 4 – 6 Treasury Board of Canada, Secretariat (1998) *Program Evaluation Methods*	
Performance Measures Introduction Growth of Performance Measure Comparison with performance evaluation			Howlett et al., (2009), Chapter 4	
Performance Measures – continued Design and implementation Intended vs. actual uses Problems and issues in implementation and sustaining		May 5	Mc David et al., (2013), Chapters 7 – 8	
Joining Theory and Practice Cultures that Support	Evaluation Review due		Howlett et al., (2009) Chapters 7 – 9 Mc David et al., (2013),	

Evaluation Ethics and evaluation practice			Chapters 9 – 12	
Joining Theory and Practice (Cont'd) Professional judgment The political factor	Evaluation proposal presentations (peer feedback)	May 6	Pal (2010) Chapters 8 & 9	
Criteria, Standards and Measures Approaches to qualitative evaluation Connecting qualitative evaluation to performance method Benchmarking Needs assessments	Evaluation proposal presentations (peer feedback)		Howlett et al., (2009), Chapter 6	
Economic Evaluation Types In Performance Measure Cost - Effectiveness, Utility, Benefit - Analysis	Case Study presentation	May 7	Gul & Dogutus (2009), *Providing efficient police services: a CBA*, Case Study	
Measurements in Program Evaluation Measurement: procedures, terminology, and validity Units of analysis & sources of data Survey & Research Design	Case study presentation Evaluation Proposal due (1 pg. outline)		Hafstad, Aaro & Langmark (1996), *Evaluation of an anti-smoking mass media campaign*, Case Study	

Statement on Academic Integrity:

The following statement on academic integrity builds on a definition approved by Senate and is designed to make students aware of the importance of the concept and the potential consequences of departing from the core values of academic integrity.

Academic Integrity is constituted by the five core fundamental values of honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility (see www.academicintegrity.org). These values are central to the building, nurturing and sustaining of an academic community in which all members of the community will thrive. Adherence to the values expressed through academic integrity forms a foundation for the "freedom of inquiry and exchange of ideas" essential to the intellectual life of the University (see the Senate Report on Principles and Priorities http://www.queensu.ca/secretariat/policies/senate/report-principlesand- priorities).

Students are responsible for familiarizing themselves with the regulations concerning academic integrity and for ensuring that their assignments conform to the principles of academic integrity. Information on academic integrity is available in the Graduate Studies Calendar

(http://www.queensu.ca/calendars/sgsr/ Academic_Integrity_Policy.html). Departures from academic integrity include plagiarism, use of unauthorized materials, facilitation, forgery and falsification, and are antithetical to the development of an academic community at Queen's. Given the seriousness of these matters, actions which contravene the regulation on academic integrity carry sanctions that can range from a warning or the loss of grades on an assignment to the failure of a course to a requirement to withdraw from the university.

Disability Accommodations statement:

The following statement on disability accommodations builds on a definition approved by Senate that clearly articulates both the commitment that Queen's University has to facilitating the integration of students with disabilities into the University community and the responsibility that students with disabilities have to identify needs requiring accommodation. All educators are encouraged to add the following statement to their course syllabi provided by the Queen's University Equity Office
http://www.queensu.ca/equity/accessibility/policystatements/accommodationstatement

> Queen's University is committed to achieving full accessibility for persons with disabilities. Part of this commitment includes arranging academic accommodations for students with disabilities to ensure they have an equitable opportunity to participate in all of their academic activities. If you are a student with a disability and think you may need accommodations, you are strongly encouraged to contact Student Wellness Services (SWS) and register as early as possible. For more information, including important deadlines, please visit the Student Wellness website at: http://www.queensu.ca/studentwellness/ accessibility-services/