GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT
DIVISION of EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY,
RESEARCH METHODS AND EDUCATION POLICY

EDRS 631
Program Evaluation

Credits: 3

Semester & Year: Fall 2012

Dates: From August 28, 2012 to December 4, 2012

Meeting Time/Days: Tuesdays, 4:30 p.m. to 7:10 p.m.

Location: Robinson Hall, B205

PROFESSOR(S): Lori C. Bland, Ph.D.

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COURSE DESCRIPTION:

Prerequisites: None, but EDRS 590 or equivalent recommended.

Catalog Description: EDRS 631 Program Evaluation (3:3:0). Introduces students to perspectives of existing and emerging issues, theories, and models of program evaluation.

Course Description: This course examines the theory, ethics, and practice of program evaluation. Areas of focus include understanding the nature of program evaluation and using program evaluation in applied settings, including education, state or federal agencies, community health, nonprofits, etc. This course supports the mission of the Educational Psychology Program: "to conduct basic and applied research and program evaluation in government agencies and private and public educational organizational settings."

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NATURE OF COURSE DELIVERY:

A variety of learning approaches will be used to engage students in classroom learning, including lecture, whole and small group discussion, assigned readings, examining case studies, and problem-based learning in field studies. Class participants will identify specific areas of learner need within their job position or interest area. Class participants will have the opportunity to work in groups or individually to complete in-class and homework assignments. Mini-lectures will generally open each instructional period to set the focus for the class session. While the mini-lectures are relevant to specific chapters in the required textbook, they are not taken exclusively from this source. The final segment of the class period will be devoted to small group discussions or in-class assignments. Students will engage in field studies to gain practical experience with program evaluation methods. When available, guest speakers will enrich the course by sharing their experiences in program evaluation and providing students with insight into the world of the professional evaluator. The Blackboard site for this course includes readings, assignments, and other related resources.

LEARNER OUTCOMES:

This course is one of the elective courses offered within the Assessment, Evaluation, and Testing Concentration within the Master of Science in Educational Psychology. As a result of this course, the students will be able to:

- Understand the nature of program evaluation
- Compare and contrast program evaluation and social science research
- Apply the American Evaluation Association Guiding Principles in planning and conducting program evaluations
- Distinguish among the major models and methods of conducting program evaluation
- Apply evaluation models and methods appropriately within a given evaluation context
- Understand program evaluation questions, including but not limited to, satisfaction, program implementation, program outcomes, etc.
- Understand how to develop, implement, and analyze evaluation data from a variety of evaluation tools
- Understand the linkages between program evaluation, program design, and program implementation
- Understand issues related to utilization of evaluation information
- Understand the cultural, political, economic, and social justice implications of program evaluations

PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS

The goal of the course is to facilitate development of a level high of competence and professional-level understanding of program evaluation design, practice, and use to make typical decisions about program improvement, program continuance, program budgeting, etc. Learner outcomes are consistent with the Educational Psychology Program standards:

- Candidates will demonstrate an understanding of the basic concepts, principles, techniques, approaches, and ethical issues involved in program evaluation.
- Candidates will use their knowledge of program evaluation methods to critically read and evaluate program evaluations or articles about program evaluation.
- Candidates will use their knowledge of program evaluation to develop a program evaluation plan and conduct a program evaluation.
- Candidates will demonstrate critical thinking, oral presentation, technological, and writing skills as they are used in the profession. Communication and dissemination skills include the following:
    - Knowledge and use of APA style
    - Oral presentations
    - Poster presentations
    - Article abstracts
    - Literature reviews
    - Program evaluation proposals
    - Technological skills (including library/reference skills, interactive display skills, data analysis skills)

Student Outcomes and Relationship to Professional Standards

The student outcomes are informed by the American Evaluation Association Guiding Principles (AEA, 2004) for professionals conducting program evaluation:

A. **Systematic Inquiry:** Evaluators conduct systematic, data-based inquiries.

B. **Competence:** Evaluators provide competent performance to stakeholders.

C. **Integrity/Honesty:** Evaluators display honesty and integrity in their own behavior, and attempt to ensure the honesty and integrity of the entire evaluation process.

D. **Respect for People:** Evaluators respect the security, dignity, and self-worth of respondents, program participants, clients, and other evaluation stakeholders.

E. **Responsibilities for General and Public Welfare:** Evaluators articulate and take into account the diversity of general and public interests and values that may be related to evaluation.

In addition students examine and develop competencies to adhere to the Program Evaluation Standards developed by the Joint Committee on Standards for Educational Evaluation (2011) including:

A. **Utility Standards:** The utility standards are intended to increase the extent to which program stakeholders find evaluation processes and products valuable in meeting their needs.

B. **Feasibility Standards:** The feasibility standards are intended to increase evaluation effectiveness and efficiency.

C. **Proprietary Standards:** The proprietary standards support what is proper, fair, legal, right, and just in evaluations.

D. **Accuracy Standards:** The accuracy standards are intended to increase the dependability and truthfulness of evaluation representations, propositions, and findings, especially those that support interpretations and judgments about quality.

E. **Evaluation Accountability Standards:** The evaluation accountability standards encourage adequate documentation of evaluations and a metaevaluative perspective focused on improvement and accountability for evaluation processes and products.

REQUIRED TEXTS:

Rossi, P.H., Lipsey, M., & Freeman, H. E. (2004). *Evaluation: A systemic approach. 7th Ed.* Thousand Oaks: Sage.

RECOMMENDED TEXTS:

Yarborough, D. B., Shulha, L. M., Hopson, R. K., Caruthers, F. A. (2011). *The program evaluation standards: A guide for evaluators and evaluation users. 3rd Ed.* Thousand Oaks: Sage.

American Evaluation Association. (July 2004). *Guiding principles for evaluators.* Author: Fairhaven, MA. Retrieved August 21, 2012:
http://www.eval.org/GPTraining/GP%20Training%20Final/gp.principles.pdf

ADDITIONAL READINGS:

Additional readings can be found on the indicated website, Blackboard, or will be distributed by the instructor in class.

Annie E. Casey Foundation. Real life lessons learned and resources in building capacity for advocacy and policy evaluation among KIDS Count grantees. Retrieved August 21, 2012:

http://www.innonet.org/resources/files/AEA2008_AECF_and_ORS_10_Lessons.pdf

McCawley, P. F. The logic model for program planning and evaluation. (2009). Retrieved August 21, 2012: http://www.uiweb.uidaho.edu/extension/LogicModel.pdf

Norris, J. (2009). Foreign Language Program Evaluation Case Studies. Foreign Language Program Evaluation Project. National Foreign Language Resource Center. University of Hawaii at Manoa. Retrieved August 21, 2012 at: http://nflrc.hawaii.edu/evaluation/E_casestudy.htm#1

Rouda, R. H. & Kusy, M. E. Needs assessment. The first step. Retrieved August 21, 2012: http://alumnus.caltech.edu/~rouda/T2_NA.html

Sample Program Evaluation Documents from State Agencies:

Fertman, C. I., Tarasevich, S. L., & Hepler, N. A. (November 2003). *Retrospective Analysis of the Pennsylvania Student Assistance Program Outcome Data: Implications for Practice and Research.* Bethesda, MD: CDM Group, Inc. Retrieved on August 16, 2012 from http://www.doe.virginia.gov/support/prevention/dropout_truancy/resources/retrospective_analysis.pdf

Freeman, S., & Zoblotsky, T. (March 2010). *Evaluating 21st Century Community Learning Centers.* Presentation for the Spring Institute Virginia Department of Education, Richmond, VA. Retrieved on August 16, 2012 from http://www.doe.virginia.gov/federal_programs/esea/title4/part_b/conference_presentations/2010/march/va_evaluation_system_handout.pdf

Virginia Department of Education (no date). *Developing a Program: Infrastructure and Process Planning Steps.* Richmond, VA: Author. Retrieved on August 16, 2012 from http://www.doe.virginia.gov/support/health_medical/virginia_school_health_guidelines/developing_program_infrastructure.pdf

Virginia Department of Education (no date). *Effective Elementary Reading Programs Assessment and Planning Instrument.* Richmond, VA: Author. Retrieved on August 16, 2012 from http://www.doe.virginia.gov/instruction/english/elementary/reading/reading_prog_planning_guide.pdf

Virginia Department of Education (2005).*Creating Community Service Opportunities for Suspended and Expelled Youth.* Richmond, VA: Author. Retrieved on August 16, 2012 from http://www.doe.virginia.gov/federal_programs/safe_drug-free/publications/community_service_suspended_expelled.pdf

Virginia Department of Education (July 2009). *Virginia Migrant Education Program Self-Evaluation.* Richmond, VA: Author. Retrieved on August 16, 2012 from http://www.doe.virginia.gov/instruction/esl/migrants/program_self_evaluation.pdf

Virginia Department of Education (December 2011). *Migrant Education Program Evaluation Report.* Richmond, VA: Author. Retrieved on August 16, 2012 from http://www.doe.virginia.gov/instruction/esl/migrants/vdoemep_evaluation_report.pdf

Virginia Department of Education (2011-2012). *Monitoring Indicators for McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Program: Standards, Assessment, and Accountability.* Richmond, VA: Author. Retrieved on August 16, 2012 from http://www.doe.virginia.gov/federal_programs/esea/federal_monitoring/protocol/title_10_part_c/title_10_part_c.pdf

Virginia Department of Education (2012-2017). *Advancing Work Force Readiness: Adult Education and Literacy for 21st Century Virginia. A Strategic Plan for 2012-2017.* Richmond, VA: Author. Retrieved on August 16, 2012 from http://www.doe.virginia.gov/about/tech_and_career_ed/adulted_goals_landscape_brochure.pdf

Additional text-based resources:

American Psychological Association. (2009). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association. (6th Ed.).* Washington, DC: Author.

WEBSITE RESOURCES

Multimedia Educational Resources for Learning and Online Teaching (MERLOT)
http://www.merlot.org/merlot/materials.htm;jsessionid=002A8DD7F8B7CEFD857F34D455374C14?sort.property=relevance&materialType=&keywords=Program+Evaluation&category=&newsearchbutton0.x=25&newsearchbutton0.y=21

National Center for Education Statistics
http://nces.ed.gov

National Research Center on Evaluation, Standards, and Student Testing (CRESST),
http://www.cse.ucla.edu/

Virginia Department of Education
http://www.doe.virginia.gov/testing/index.shtml

Wisconsin Center for Education Research
http://www.wcer.wisc.edu/

COURSE REQUIREMENTS, PERFORMANCE-BASED ASSESSMENT, AND EVALUATION CRITERIA:

A. Requirements

Students are expected to:
- Use your GMU e-mail account for all correspondence with the instructor.
- Attend all class sessions. Because class participation is a factor in grading, absences, tardiness, or early departure will be used as de facto evidence of nonparticipation. [If an emergency prevents you from attending class, please call or e-mail the instructor in advance preferably, but as soon as possible.]
- Be on time for class.
- Remain in class until class is dismissed by the instructor.
- Attend to and participate meaningfully in class lectures, discussions, individual assignments, and group activities. Responding to phone calls, texting, checking e-mails, Twitter, Facebook, or other electronic communication modes should not occur during class time.
- Submit a paper copy of all assignments to the instructor at the beginning of class on the due date. You must also e-mail the instructor a copy of the assignment using your GMU e-mail account before class begins on the due date.
- Submit all individual and group assignments and assessments on time. **I will deduct 5% of the total grade for every day the assignment is late without a documented emergency situation. If you have a medical issue that prevents you from attending class or completing assignments on-time, please work with the Office of Disability Services.**
- Use the APA Manual as a guide for written assignments, cite readings and program evaluation or other content literature within the body of the text, and complete a reference list at the end of the assignment according to the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, 6th Edition* (APA, 2009) for all assignments.

B. Performance-based assessments

All of the student products specified under course requirements will require performance-based assessments guided by scoring criteria, such as rubrics.

1.   Class participation (30 points). Because of the importance of lecture and class discussions to students' learning experience, I expect each student to come to class on time and participate in class discussions. Additionally, assigned readings are to be completed before class. Attendance, punctuality, preparation, and active contribution to small and large group discussions and individual, small, or large group activities are essential. All in class assignments are to be completed by the end of class, or by the start of the next class period. These elements reflect the professional attitude implied in the

course goals. If you miss a class, you are responsible for completing all assignments and readings by the next class.

2.   Program Reflection and Evaluation Questions (10 points) Class participants will prepare a brief report about a program. The paper will provide a brief description of the program; a brief description of program documents; a description of the program constituents and stakeholders; any issues, concerns, or challenges that the program faces; and reflections related to potential underlying causal factors related to the issues, concerns, or challenges. The paper will briefly describe the types of data that have been or are currently used for program monitoring, assessment, and/or evaluation. The paper should close with proposed evaluation questions for this program. The paper should be 6-10 pages in length.

3.   Document Analysis (10 points) Class participants will prepare a brief report analyzing program documents. The analysis should include a description of each of the program documents; a comparison to regulations, policy, guidelines, etc.; a critical review of the documents noting areas of strength, concern, contradictions, missing information, etc.; and conclusions based on the findings from the document review.

4.   Evaluation Plan (10 points) Class participants will develop a brief work roposal for an evaluation based on the reflective analysis and evaluation questions. The proposal should provide a justification for the evaluation, a plan for the development of data capture instruments or tools, a plan to capture and analyze the information using the instruments, and a plan to use the data to address the evaluation questions.

5.   Interview and Focus Group Protocol (10 points) Class participants will develop interview and focus group protocol to assist with data capture for the program evaluation. The interview protocol should include a description of the sample to be interviewed, directions for the interviewer, a minimum of 3 interview questions, with a minimum of 3 follow-up probes for each interview question. The focus group protocol should include a description of the sample to be interviewed (NOT the same as the for the interview protocol), directions to the interviewers for gathering data from the focus group, rules for group discussion, a minimum of 2 focus questions, with 3 follow-up probes. Note the sample for the interviews and the sample for the focus group should be different.

6.   Survey (10 points) Class participants will develop a survey to assist with data capture for the program evaluation. The survey should address a different stakeholder sample than for the interview protocol and for the focus group protocol. The survey should include 3 sections with a minimum of 7 questions which use a scale for each section, and at least 3 qualitative questions for the survey.

7.   Program Description (20 points) The program description should be based upon the previous information gathered and should begin to be developed into rich and "thick" description. The program description should include a description of the

constituents served and stakeholders; a cogent description of the program, the theory underlying the program, the design of the program, the mission, goals and objectives, personnel (program officers, program implementation staff, and any other staff), program activities, intended outcomes, budget, and any other information that will help portray a clear picture of the program. The program description should be grounded within the document analysis.

8. **Logic Model (10 points)** Class participants will develop a logic model for the program based upon their understanding of the program. The logic model should depict the theory of change.

9. **Implementation Fidelity Tool (10 points).** Class participants will develop an implementation fidelity tool, such as an observational protocol, checklist, rating scale, etc. to determine whether program implementation staff are implementing the program with fidelity to the program theory and program design.

10. **Evaluation Report (60 points).** The evaluation report will include items 2-10, and data from at least 2 of the tools (interview, focus group, survey, or implementation fidelity tool), the analysis of the data from each of the tools, results and conclusions based on the evaluation findings, and recommendations to the program officer. The impact study will NOT be conducted for the evaluation report.

11. **Oral Presentation (20 points).** You will present your evaluation findings and recommendations to the class.

C. Criteria for Evaluation

There are 200 total points for the course, distributed across the assignments and classroom discussion expectations.

D. Grading scale

Grade Earned	Points Earned
A+	195-200 points
A	185-194 points
A -	180-184 points
B+	170-179 points
B	160-169 points
B-	146-159 points
C	120-145 points
F	119 or fewer points

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

Student Expectations

- Students must adhere to the guidelines of the George Mason University Honor Code [See http://academicintegrity.gmu.edu/honorcode/].

- Students with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with the George Mason University Office of Disability Services (ODS) and inform their instructor, in writing, at the beginning of the semester [See http://ods.gmu.edu/].

- Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing [See http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/1301gen.html].

- Students are responsible for the content of university communications sent to their George Mason University email account and are required to activate their account and check it regularly. All communication from the university, college, school, and program will be sent to students solely through their Mason email account.

- Students must follow the university policy stating that all sound emitting devices shall be turned off during class unless otherwise authorized by the instructor.

- Students are expected to exhibit professional behaviors and dispositions at all times.

Campus Resources

- The George Mason University Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) staff consists of professional counseling and clinical psychologists, social workers, and counselors who offer a wide range of services (e.g., individual and group counseling, workshops and outreach programs) to enhance students' personal experience and academic performance [See http://caps.gmu.edu/].

- The George Mason University Writing Center staff provides a variety of resources and services (e.g., tutoring, workshops, writing guides, handbooks) intended to support students as they work to construct and share knowledge through writing [See http://writingcenter.gmu.edu/].

- For additional information on the College of Education and Human Development, Graduate School of Education, please visit our website [See http://gse.gmu.edu/].

CLASS SCHEDULE

Session	Date	Topic/Learning Experiences	Readings and Assignments
1	8/30/12	Overview of Course Program Design, Planning, & Evaluation	Rossi – Chapter 1 VDOE. *Developing a Program* Norris. *Case Studies*
2	9/6/12	Tailoring Evaluations	Rossi-Chapter 2 VDOE. *Creating Community Service* Annie Casey Foundation. *Real life lessons*
3	9/13/12	Identifying Issues and Formulating Questions	Rossi-Chapter 3 Fertman-*Retrospective Analysis* **Reflection and Evaluation Questions Due**
4	9/20/12	Assessing the Need for a Program Self-Evaluation	Rossi-Chapter 4 VDOE. *Migrant Education Self-Evaluation* **Document Analysis Due**
5	9/27/12	Designing Data Collection Tools	VDOE. *Migrant Education Evaluation* **Evaluation Plan Due**
6	10/4/12	Expressing and Assessing Program Theory	Rossi-Chapter 5 **Interview and Focus Group Protocol Due**
7	10/11/12	Logic Models	Rouda. *Needs assessment* McCawley. *The logic model* VDOE. *Monitoring Indicators* **Survey Due**
8	10/18/12	Assessing and Monitoring Program Process	Rossi-Chapter 6
9	10/25/12	Implementation Fidelity and Designing Observational Tools	VDOE. *Effective Elementary Reading* **Program Description Due**
10	11/1/12	Measuring and Monitoring Program Outcomes	Rossi-Chapter 7 **Logic Model Due**
11	11/8/12	Assessing Program Impact: Randomized Field Experiments	Rossi-Chapter 8 **Implementation Fidelity Tool Due**
12	11/15/12	Assessing Program Impact: Alternative Designs	Rossi-Chapter 9
13	11/29/12	Detecting, Interpreting, and Analyzing Program Effects	Rossi-Chapter 10
14	12/6/12	Measuring Efficiency	Rossi-Chapter 11 VDOE. *Advancing Work Force Readiness* **Evaluation Report Due**
15	12/13/12	The Social and Ethical Context of Evaluation Pulling It All Together	Rossi-Chapter 12 Freeman. *Evaluating 21st Century CLCs.* **Oral Presentation Due**

Sample Rubrics:
Attendance & Participation

Student participation is imperative to student learning and a successful class. The following rubric outlines how student participation scores will be determined in this course. All students are expected to demonstrate specific characteristics and actions throughout the semester. The quality and quantity of these actions will determine the points assigned for participation.

Students are expected to:

a) Be punctual, present (in mind and body), and well prepared for class.
b) Participate fully in class activities and assignments – take an active part in small and large group discussions (without dominating the conversations) and pay attention to class lectures.
c) Make insightful comments, which are informed by required readings and demonstrate reflection on those readings. Specifically, students should come to class with questions, comments, and thoughts on the current readings.
d) Treat class activities, group discussions, and class discussions as important components of the course, showing respect for fellow classmates and the course material.
e) Complete individual and group class activities within the time allotted, ensuring full participation of all group members. Submit class activities to the instructor at the end of class.

Each of the 5 criteria will be assessed on a 4-point scale.

4 = Student *consistently* demonstrated the criterion throughout the semester.
3 = Student *frequently* demonstrated the criterion throughout the semester.
2 = Student *intermittently* demonstrated the criterion throughout the semester.
1 = Student *rarely* demonstrated the criterion throughout the semester.
0 = Student *did not* demonstrate the criterion throughout the semester.

The participation grade will be calculated as the sum of points for each criterion.

Appendix A

Evaluation Plan Rubric

Criteria	Outstanding (4)	Competent (3)	Minimal (2)	Unsatisfactory (1)
Introduction *Include a synthesis of the most important elements describing the program and justification for the evaluation*	The introduction provides a clear and complete synthesis of the information about the program and justification for the evaluation. No extraneous text is included.	The introduction may have minor issues with clarity or extraneous text. The introduction is mostly complete, but may lack a piece of key information related to the program or the justification.	The introduction has several issues with clarity and/or extraneous text. The introduction is incomplete, lacking more than one piece of key information about the program or the justification.	The introduction is unclear and/or too brief to completely communicate information about the program or the justification.
Proposed Methods and Procedures				
• Instrument Development	The description of all steps to be taken to construct the instruments is clear and complete and includes relevant resources.	The description of most of the steps to be taken to construct the instruments is clear. There may be minor issues details or a step missing within the description. Relevant resources may be incomplete.	The description has a major issue related to clarity or missing steps. One or two resources may not be relevant or may be incomplete.	The description has multiple issues with clarity and/or many steps are missing. Most of the resources are not relevant, or resources are missing.
• Data Capture and Analysis	The proposed plan for implementation of data	The proposed plan for has minor issues related	The proposed plan appears to be executable,	The proposed plan does not appear to be

Criteria	Outstanding (4)	Competent (3)	Minimal (2)	Unsatisfactory (1)
	capture and analysis is easily executable, clear, complete, and appropriate.	to execution, clarity, missing details, or appropriateness.	however more than one step is missing, steps are unclear, and details are missing. One or more components of the plan may not be implemented appropriately, or the data analysis for one of the instruments may not be appropriate.	executable. Multiple steps are missing, unclear, or lacking details. More than one steps in the data capture or analysis plan is incorrect or inappropriate.
• Proposed Applications for Data Use	The proposed plan for data use is easily executable, clear, and complete.	The proposed plan for has minor issues related to execution, clarity, or missing details.	The proposed plan appears to be executable, however more than one step is missing, steps are unclear, and details are missing.	The proposed plan does not appear to be executable. Multiple steps are missing, unclear, lacking details.
APA Style *Use APA writing style, formatting, including citations within text and references.*	Writing is concise, coherent, well-organized, and with correct APA style. Citations and references are correct and complete.	Writing lacks some clarity or has minor organizational problems affecting the overall coherence, and/or there are some errors in APA style, citations, or references. There may also be a small number of missing citations or references.	Writing has multiple problems with clarity, coherence, and organization. There are many errors in APA style, citations, and/or references. Multiple references are missing or incomplete.	Writing lacks clarity, coherence, many errors, and/or no use of APA style. Citations and references are minimal or absent.

APPENDIX B

GENERAL GUIDELINES TO WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS

 All course projects should be typed, double-spaced, and include a cover page. Include an abstract (250 works maximum) that provides a synopsis of the content, such as purpose, procedures, findings and conclusions. In terms of general style, the format provided in the sixth edition of **Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association**   (American Psychological Association, 2009) should be followed. Students should pay close attention to:

- ■ Margins
- ■Headings/Subheadings
- ■ Writing Style
- ■Citations in the Text
- ■Reference Page

The *cover page* should include the title of the assignment, the standard course requirement statement, your name, date, and institutional affiliation information.

You should make a copy of your projects before submitting them to the instructor.

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