

George Mason University
College of Education and Human Development
Educational Psychology

EDEP 631: 001 – Program Evaluation
3 Credits, Fall 2018
Tuesdays: 4:30 – 7:10 pm | Thompson L018 Fairfax Campus

Faculty

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Prerequisites/Corequisites:

EDRS 631: Course Restrictions: Not Repeatable for Credit; No prerequisites or Corequisites

University Catalog Course Description

Focuses on perspectives of existing and emerging issues, theories, and models of program evaluation. Involves implementation of program evaluation in related fields and school districts.

Course Overview

This course examines the theory, ethics, and practice of program evaluation. Areas of focus include understanding the nature of program evaluation, understanding applications of appropriate methods used in 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, which is “to develop professionals who: a. apply principles of learning, cognition and motivation to vital problems in the area of education in a variety of settings; b. develop a solid understanding of research, assessment, and evaluation methodologies; and c. develop an analytical and scholarly approach to critically assessing theoretical perspectives, research, and practice within and across content domains.”

Course Delivery Method

Lecture and in-class activities that require students to be active and contribute to class and small group discussions. Individual reflection activities may be included.

Learner Outcomes or Objectives

This course is designed to enable students to do the following:

1. Understand the nature of program evaluation
2. Compare and contrast program evaluation and social science research
3. Apply the American Evaluation Association Guiding Principles in planning and conducting program evaluations
4. Distinguish among the major models and methods of conducting program evaluation
5. Apply evaluation models and methods appropriately within a given evaluation context

6. Understand program evaluation questions, including but not limited to, satisfaction, program implementation, program outcomes, etc.
7. Understand how to develop, implement, and analyze evaluation data from a variety of evaluation tools
8. Understand the linkages between program evaluation, program design, and program implementation
9. Understand issues related to utilization of evaluation information
10. Understand the cultural, political, economic, and social justice implications of program evaluations

Professional Standards

Standard 3: Knowledge of Educational Research and Assessment. Candidates will demonstrate an understanding of the basic concepts, principles, techniques, approaches, and ethical issues involved in educational research. **Standard 4:** Analysis, Critique, and Evaluation of Educational Research. Candidates will use their knowledge of quantitative and qualitative research methodology to critically read and evaluate quantitative and qualitative research articles.

Standard 5: Planning and Implementation of Educational Research. Candidates will use their knowledge of quantitative and qualitative research methodology to develop a research proposal and conduct research.

Standard 6: Communication and Dissemination of Educational Research. Candidates will demonstrate critical thinking, oral presentation, technological, and writing skills as they are used in the profession. These include: a. Knowledge and use of APA style b. Oral presentations c. Poster presentations d. Article abstracts e. Research proposals f. Literature reviews g. Technological skills (including library/reference skills, interactive displays skills, data analysis skills)

Required Texts

Alkin, M. C., & Vo, A.C. (2011). *Evaluation Essentials: From A to Z (2nd ed.)*. NY: Guilford.

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

Other readings will also be assigned for the course and made available on Blackboard.

Recommended Texts

Mertens, D.M., & Wilson, A.T. (2012). *Program evaluation theory and practice: A comprehensive guide*. New York, NY: Guilford

Course Performance Evaluation

Students are expected to submit all assignments on time in the manner outlined by the instructor (e.g., Blackboard, hard copy). **Late assignments will not be accepted without prior instructor approval.**

- **Class Participation (50 points, ~16 class sessions).** Students are expected to participate in in-class activities that are individual or small group assignments. Assigned readings are to be completed. Attendance is required. Please contact the instructor if you plan to miss a class. On-time submissions will give you 10 points – late submission of assignments will automatically deduct 10 points from participation points (all-or-nothing).
 - Attend all class sessions on time.
 - Use your MASON e-mail account for all correspondence with the instructor.
 - Complete readings in advance of the class and participate fully in discussions, group, or individual classwork.
 - Submit all assignments to the class blackboard on time.
- **RFP Individual Project (50 points):** Students will select a program of their choice (or one provided) and create a hypothetical request for proposal (RFP) seeking evaluation agencies and evaluators to respond with proposals to evaluate the program. The RFP will contain a description of the program, evaluation needs, budget parameters, and a description of expected evaluator qualifications.
- **Logic Model (50 points):** Students will develop a logic model for a given program that includes all the key components. The model should clearly provide an illustration of the theory of the program by accurately listing the *input, activities, output, and outcomes* (short, intermediate, long-term).
- **Evaluation Project Report (120 points):** You have one major project in this course, which is to conduct a program evaluation. The evaluation project has four parts. Parts are due throughout the course. This is a performance-based assessment.
 - **Program Overview/Introduction (20 points):** Prepare a brief report about a program. Include a description of the program. Provide a justification for the program evaluation. The justification should include a discussion of past or current monitoring, assessment, or evaluation efforts and any key findings pertinent for your evaluation of the program; a discussion of issues, concerns, or challenges that the program faces and potential factors related to the issues. Include draft evaluation questions. Include a reference list. Include a logic model.
 - **Evaluation Plan (20 points):** Develop an evaluation plan based on the program overview and evaluation questions. The plan should include a revised program overview/introduction with any revised evaluation questions (if applicable), evaluation design, data sources and sampling plan, methods and measures used to collect and analyze the data, data analysis plan, a timeline, and references.
 - **Results & Discussion (20 points):** Write an evaluation report. The report should include the introduction, a review of relevant literature, methods, findings, a discussion that interprets the findings in terms of the research or best practice literature and includes recommendations based on strengths and opportunities for program improvement, and references.

- **Evaluator Recommendations (20 points):** Provide a list of recommendations addressing strengths and opportunities for program improvement. The recommendations should be appropriate given the extent to which the data and results address the evaluation questions.
- **Reflection (20 points):** Provide a reflection of your learning experiences that highlight your confidence in your skills initially, what worked well, what were the challenges, lessons learned, and your identify as an evaluator.
- **Adherence to APA Style (20 points)**

Grading

There are a total 270 points for the course distributed among the four assignments listed above.

Grading scale:

A+: 264 - 270

A: 251 - 269

A- : 243 - 250

B+: 238 - 242

B: 224 - 237

B-: 216 - 223

C: 189 - 215

F: Below 189

Professional Dispositions

See <https://cehd.gmu.edu/students/polices-procedures/>

Class Schedule

Note: Faculty reserves the right to alter the schedule as necessary, with notification to students.

WEEK	TOPICS	READINGS/MULTIMEDIA	ACTIVITES/ASSIGNMENTS DUE
1	Aug 28, 2018	Course Overview Introduction to Evaluation	Sections A-B AEA's Guiding Principles
2	Sep 4, 2018	Understanding Evaluators, Evaluand, and Stakeholders	Sections C-F
3	Sep 11, 2018	Evaluation Theory, Models Evaluation & Research	Leeuw & Donaldson (2015) Frye & Hemmer (2012)
4	Sep 18, 2018	Understanding the Program Evaluation Models (contd.)	Section G-I Checkpoint: project/program description due
5	Sep 25, 2018	Framing evaluation questions Evaluability	Section J, N Logic Model Due
6	Oct 2, 2018	Evaluation Plan/Design	Sections O,P,Q
7	Oct 9, 2018	No Class Meeting: Fall Break	
8	Oct 16, 2018	Data Collection in Evaluation	Section K, L, M Evaluation Plan Due
9	Oct 23, 2018	Data Analysis & Interpretation	Sections R, S, T RFP Assignment Due
10	Oct 31, 2018	Data Analysis & Interpretation	Sections R, S, T
11	Nov 6, 2018	Reporting Findings Evaluator Recommendations Use of Evaluation Results	Sections U, V, Appendix A Data Analysis drafts due (optional)
12	Nov 13, 2018	Managing Evaluations	Sections W, X, Y
13	Nov 20, 2018	Evaluation Lessons Becoming an Evaluation Professional Evaluation Resources	Section Z American Evaluation Association Western Michigan University's Center for Evaluation ERIC Clearinghouse for Assessment and Evaluation. Online Evaluation Resource Library
14	Nov 27, 2018	Project presentations	
15	Dec 4, 2018	Project presentations	
16	Dec 11, 2018	Reading Day	Evaluation Project Report Due December 12, 2018 11:59 pm

Core Values Commitment

The College of Education and Human Development is committed to collaboration, ethical leadership, innovation, research-based practice, and social justice. Students are expected to adhere to these principles: <http://cehd.gmu.edu/values/>.

GMU Policies and Resources for Students

Policies

- Students must adhere to the guidelines of the Mason Honor Code (see <https://catalog.gmu.edu/policies/honor-code-system/>).
- Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing (see <http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/policies/responsible-use-of-computing/>).
- Students are responsible for the content of university communications sent to their Mason 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 with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with George Mason University Disability Services. Approved accommodations will begin at the time the written letter from Disability Services is received by the instructor (see <http://ods.gmu.edu/>).
- Students must silence all sound emitting devices during class unless otherwise authorized by the instructor.

Campus Resources

- Support for submission of assignments to Tk20 should be directed to tk20help@gmu.edu or <https://cehd.gmu.edu/aero/tk20>. Questions or concerns regarding use of Blackboard should be directed to <http://coursesupport.gmu.edu/>.
- For information on student support resources on campus, see <https://ctfe.gmu.edu/teaching/student-support-resources-on-campus>

For additional information on the College of Education and Human Development, please visit our website <https://cehd.gmu.edu/students/> .

Rubric: Class 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 well prepared for class by completing assigned readings.
- b) Participate fully in class activities and assignments – take an active part in small and large group discussions (without dominating the conversations).
- c) Treat class activities and discussions as important components of the course, showing respect for fellow classmates and the course material.
- d) Attend all class sessions. Arrive on time and stay for the duration of the session.

Rubric: In-Class Assignments

Criteria	Unsatisfactory (0-2)	Minimal (3)	Competent (4)	Outstanding (5)
Connections to Coursework <i>Demonstrate connections to course concepts in the task</i>	does not include connections to course concepts	Some connections to course concepts that may not be relevant.	adequate connections to relevant course concepts	clear and insightful connections to relevant course concepts
Analysis <i>For tasks that require analysis</i>	Analysis is incomplete or missing.	Analysis is general and addresses only some aspects of the task requirements	Analysis is complete and adequately addresses task requirements	Analysis is thorough and detailed; fully addresses task requirements
APA Style <i>Use APA style and formatting</i>	Uses concise, coherent, well-organized writing with correct APA style.	Writes with some lack of clarity and/or inconsistent APA style with some errors.	Writes with a lack of clarity and coherence, many errors, or incorrect APA style.	Writes with little clarity or coherence, many errors, and/or no use of APA style.

Note: The criteria will vary depending on the nature of the assignments/tasks.

Rubric: Logic Model

Criteria	Needs Improvement (below 6)	Satisfactory (6-8)	Exemplary (9-10)	Score
Comprehensiveness	Does not present a comprehensive picture of the program	Presents a comprehensive picture of the program	Presents a highly comprehensive picture of the program	
Placement of Components	Components are missing and/or not placed in correct columns	All components are placed in correct columns	All components are placed in correct columns The outcomes are horizontally and vertically places reflect	
Plausible connections	Outcomes are not plausible or unclear in their connection inputs and activities	Outcomes are plausible from the inputs and activities Intermediate and long term outcomes are reasonably linked	Outcomes are highly plausible from the inputs and activities Intermediate and long term outcomes are linked	
Logic	Outcomes and outputs are not logically linked to activities	Outcomes and outputs are linked logically to activities		
Brevity & Readability	Exceeds a page; language is confusing or highly technical with jargon	Fits one page; language is clear and free of jargon; understood by a non-technical reader		
Total				

From: http://misalondon.ca/PDF/BIP/MeasuringImpact/Logic_Model_Assessment_Rubric.pdf

Rubric: Request for Proposal (RfP)

Criteria	Needs Improvement (below 6)	Satisfactory (6-8)	Exemplary (9-10)	Score
Program description - Background	Description of the program is unclear	Description of the program is provided: covers the major purpose, activities, and intended outcomes	Description of the program clearly communicates the major purpose, activities, and intended outcomes	
Evaluation Needs or Scope of Work	Description does not provide a clear understanding of evaluation requirements	Evaluation requirements provide a clear understanding of the scope of work and evaluation needs.	Evaluation requirements provide a clear understanding of the scope of work and evaluation needs.	
Evaluator Qualification/Capabilities	Incomplete or insufficient details on evaluator qualification	Evaluator qualification is described: includes question or bullet points seeking case studies/previous work, agency or individual capacity and qualification, and other restrictions as applicable	Evaluator qualification is described exceptionally well: includes question or bullet points seeking case studies/previous work, agency or individual capacity and qualification, and other restrictions as applicable	
Budget Considerations	Budget is not included	Budget is included that seems reasonable given the evaluation needs		
Grammar and Mechanics	Contains several errors that affect readability	The product is free from grammatical errors and evidences professional writing skills		

Rubric: Evaluation Project

Project Component	Unsatisfactory (below 10)	Minimal (10-14)	Competent (14 -18)	Outstanding (18 -20)	Score
<p>Introduction Include a synthesis of the most important elements describing the program, justification for the evaluation, and evaluation questions (20 points)</p>	<p>The introduction is unclear and/or too brief to completely communicate information about the program or the justification. The evaluation questions are vague, unclear, or missing.</p>	<p>The introduction has several issues with clarity, extraneous text, or is incomplete, lacking key information about the program or the justification. More than one evaluation question is general, lacks a clear relationship to information provided in the text, or is unclear. More questions are needed to address the issues identified.</p>	<p>The introduction may have minor issues with clarity, extraneous text, or missing information. The introduction may lack information for the justification. Most of the evaluation questions are related to information provided in the text, are clear and precise. The questions may also not be completely sufficient to address the issues identified</p>	<p>The introduction provides a clear and complete synthesis of the information about the program and justification for the evaluation. Evaluation questions are related to information provided in the text, are clear and precise, and are sufficient to address the identified issues. No extraneous text is included.</p>	
<p>Plan Develop a plan derived from the program overview and evaluation questions that includes a description of the evaluation design, data sources and sampling plan, methods and measures to collect and analyze the data and timeline. (20 points)</p>	<p>Methods do not address the criteria. Data sources, research design, and data analysis are not appropriate. The timeline is missing or not feasible.</p>	<p>Methods are missing sections parts. The evaluation design, data sources, collection or analysis methods are not fully appropriate for the issues or questions. The timeline is missing major sections or has major difficulties with feasibility.</p>	<p>Methods address all parts. There are methodological concerns the evaluation design, data sources, or data collection or analysis methods. OR methods are appropriate, but not fully described. OR, the methods are described but not fully aligned to or address the evaluation issue and questions. The timeline may not fully reflect the plan or have minor</p>	<p>Methods fully address all parts. Evaluation design, data sources, data collection methods and analysis are appropriate and thoroughly described. Selection and justification of methods reflects contemporary educational evaluation methods. The methods are well aligned and address the evaluation issues and questions.</p>	

			issues related to feasibility	The plan and timeline is complete and feasible	
Results & Discussion Report of data analyses Description of findings Interpretation of findings in relation to the evaluation issues, questions, and literature Identification of limitations (20 points)	Findings do not address the criteria. Data analyses are not appropriate. Sections of findings are missing. Discussion does not address the criteria. Interpretations and conclusions are not grounded in the findings, or are missing. Findings and their interpretations are not connected evaluation issue, questions or literature, or are missing major parts.	Findings inadequately address all criteria or a criterion is missing. Data analyses are not fully appropriate. Reporting is incomplete in parts. Discussion does not address all criteria. Some interpretations and/or conclusions are not grounded in the findings. Findings and their interpretations are not connected to the evaluation issue, questions, or literature.	Findings address all criteria. Data analyses are appropriate but are not complete or accurately described. Reporting of the findings are generally appropriate for the methods employed (e.g., qualitative, quantitative, mixed methods). Discussion addresses all criteria. Interpretations and conclusions are grounded in the findings. Findings and their interpretations are generally connected to the evaluation issue, questions, and literature	Findings fully address the criteria. Data analyses are appropriate, complete, and accurately described. Reporting of the findings is appropriate for the methods employed (e.g., qualitative, quantitative, mixed methods) Discussion fully addresses all criteria. Interpretations and conclusions are well grounded in the findings. Findings and their interpretations are meaningfully connected to the evaluation issue, questions, and literature. Limitations are addressed thoughtfully.	
Evaluator Recommendations Discussion of recommendations addressing strength and opportunities for program improvement (20 points)	Recommendations are missing or not justified Explanation is missing for one or more recommendations.	Recommendations are mostly not justified based on the findings and mostly disconnected from strengths and opportunities for growth. Explanation is sparse for the recommendations is sparse	Recommendations are mostly connected to strengths and opportunities for growth and are justified and mostly explained.	Recommendations are clearly based on strengths and opportunities for growth and are well justified and explained.	

<p>Reflection A brief reflection on the key learning experiences, what worked well, and areas of improvement. (20 points)</p>	<p>The reflection on the learning experience is minimal.</p>		<p>Reflection is thoughtful in a way reflects engagement with the learning process: clearly documents what worked well, challenges, areas of improvement, evaluator identity, lessons learned.</p>		
<p>APA Style Use APA writing style, formatting, including citations within text and references. (20 points)</p>	<p>Writing lacks clarity, coherence, many errors, and/or no use of APA style. Citations and references are minimal or absent.</p>	<p>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.</p>	<p>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</p>	<p>Writing is concise, coherent, well organized, and with correct APA style. Citations and references are correct and complete.</p>	