CTRD 7540

Organization of Programs in Reading Education

# Auburn University

**Contact Information** *Instructor: Vicky Cardullo Office hours: 386-295-9346*

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*Class day and time: Wednesday 6:00-8:00*

**Course Description:**

The primary purpose of this course is to develop an introductory understanding of the skills and knowledge needed to design and implement program evaluations. The content of this course is designed to recognize the different approaches to program evaluation, building an evaluation plan, selecting and designing evaluation procedures, analyzing and reporting evaluations, and critiquing evaluations. It will examine key concepts, methods, and approaches in the field of evaluation research. Students will be exposed to the theoretical and methodological diversity inherent in current evaluation practices across a number of substantive areas (e.g., social services, education, and business).

**Accommodations:** "Students who need accommodations are asked to submit their approved accommodations through AU Access electronically and to arrange a meeting during office hours the first week of classes, or as soon as possible if accommodations are needed immediately. If you have a conflict with my office hours, an alternate time can be arranged. To set up this meeting, please get in touch with me by e-mail. If you have not established accommodations through the Office of Accessibility, but need accommodations, make an appointment with the Office of Accessibility, 1228 Haley Center, 844-2096 (V/TT)."

# Course Overview and Rationale

This course focuses on program evaluation. By the end of the course, you should be able to:

* Understand key terms used by program evaluators
* Compare and contrast various approaches to program evaluation
* Assess the strength and weaknesses of the assessments conducted by others
* Design a technically sound and useful evaluation
* Identify linkages between program strategies and program goals
* Explain how program evaluation contributes to program development, implementation, and improvement
* Discuss political and ethical issues faced by evaluators in conducting their work

# Essential Learning Objectives

* Students will research, articulate, and document a program’s theory.
* Students will create a logic model based on a program’s theory.
* Students will devise evaluation questions pertaining to both the formative and summative aspects of evaluation. Finally, students will create an evaluation matrix detailing their evaluation.
* Students will create an evaluation design.
* Students will discriminate between rigorous and weak evaluation designs.
* Students will brainstorm and problem-solve collaboratively with their fellow colleagues in class.

# Required Text

Giancola, S. (2021). *Program evaluation: Embedding evaluation into program design and development*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.

# Course Requirements1

1. **Attendance** is important. Much of the learning for this class will occur during group discussions and class activities. In addition, not all material necessary for the course is in the course textbook; course materials will include supplemental information provided during class. If you will be absent from class, you must notify the instructor through e- mail before the absence. It is your responsibility to get any missed course notes or materials from another student in the class. Chronic absenteeism will be reflected in your grade.
2. **Readings** should be done before the class for which they are assigned. Lessons will be taken primarily from the text.
3. A **weekly discussion entry** will be submitted online. Together, these will account for

**10% of your final grade**. Prompts for each week are provided below.

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| **Journal Number** | **Journal Prompt** | **Week Due** |
| **1** | Imagine you are the director of a program. How would you react if you learned that it will be evaluated by an external party? Explain your reaction and what steps, if any, you would take to prepare. | 1 |

1 Subject to change at the discretion of the instructor.

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| **Journal Number** | **Journal Prompt** | **Week Due** |
| **2** | Suppose that you have decided to conduct an evaluation of your program. What evaluation approach(es) would you adopt? Why did you choose those approaches? | 2 |
| **3** | How important is it for an evaluator to understand the program they are evaluating? How might the evaluator’s knowledge and understanding of a program influence the design of the evaluation? | 3 |
| **4** | How does a program’s theory contribute to its evaluation? How would you use program theory in designing an evaluation? | 4 |
| **5** | After using LucidChart to create your logic model, do you think it is a useful tool? Do you think you will use LucidChart again? If so, in what ways? | 5 |
| **6** | Suppose that you have decided to conduct an evaluation of your program. What evaluation design would you use? Why did you choose that design? | 6 |
| **7** | Do you think random assignment is ethical? Why or why not? | 7 |
| **8** | What are the various pros and cons of qualitative versus quantitative methods? Which do you prefer and why? | 9 |
| **9** | Suppose you are evaluating a program for a client and find that it has no impact. How would you explain this to your client? | 10 |
| **10** | What is a black box evaluation? What are the limitations of a black box evaluation? How can the tools you learned in this course help you to design a balanced, rigorous evaluation? | 11 |
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1. Four **assignments** will be due throughout the semester, accounting for **25% of your final grade**.

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| **Assignment** | **Description** | **Percentage of Final Grade** |
| **Assignment #1: Evaluation approach infographic** | Research your evaluation approach and create an infographic so that your colleagues in the class understand the approach, as well as who developed the approach and why. Be prepared to briefly share your infographic with the class. | 5% |
| **Assignment #2: Methods Summary** | Provide a 3-page summary of the methods used in an evaluation. | 5% |

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| **Assignment** | **Description** | **Percentage of Final Grade** |
| **Assignment #3: Evaluation Critique** | Provide a 4-page critique of an evaluation. | 10% |
| **Assignment #4: IRB Training Completion** | Complete the Human Subjects Protections training. When completed, please save your certificate to a PDF file and submit on CANVAS. | 10% |

1. Seven **project component** assignments will be due throughout the semester, accounting for **50% of your final grade**. All are pieces of the final evaluation project. *Ten points per weekday will be deducted for late submissions. Late submissions will not be accepted after one week past the original due date.*

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| **Project Component** | **Description** | **Percentage of Final Grade** |
| **PC#1:**  **Program Narrative** | Choose a program that you would like to evaluate and write a narrative/overview of your program, including its primary strategies/activities and its goals. Your program narrative should be 2 pages. | 5% |
| **PC #2:**  **Logic Model** | You must submit a draft of your logic model (PC #2a) the week before the final model is due (PC #2b); your logic model should be completed in LucidChart and submitted in PDF format. | 10%  (the draft is 5% of your grade and the final model is 5% of your grade) |
| **PC #3:**  **Program Theory** | Document your program’s theory. Each of your strategies/activities and goals should be included in the program theory. | 5% |
| **PC #4:**  **Evaluation Questions** | Develop at least one evaluation question for each component of your logic model. Your questions should be submitted within the evaluation matrix shell (your matrix will have two completed columns: logic model component and evaluation questions). | 5% |
| **PC #5:**  **Evaluation Design** | Propose an evaluation design for your program. | 5% |

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| **Project Description Component** | **Percentage of Final Grade** |
| **PC #6:** Create an evaluation matrix for your program; all columns  **Evaluation** should be completed.  **Matrix** | 10%  (the draft is 5% of your grade and the final model is 5% of your grade) |
| **PC #7: Final** Your evaluation plan should include a program overview, **Evaluation** your program theory, logic model, evaluation design, and **Plan and** evaluation matrix, all combined into a cohesive plan.  **Presentation** A brief **presentation** of your evaluation plan is also required. The presentation should summarize your program theory, logic model, and evaluation design. You should then be prepared to answer questions from your classmates about your plan. Presentation should be no more than 10 minutes, with 5 additional minutes available for Q&A.  *The evaluation plan will not be accepted late.* | 10% |

# Discussion Posting based on Appendix – This is a group activity see Canvas

**Course Outline**

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| **Week** | **Date** | Topics and Assignments | | **Readings (Prior to Class)** |
| Topics | Assignments Due |
| 1 | Aug 16 | Evaluation Matters | Discussion 1-Intital Response Due Aug 19 Peer Response Due Aug 23 | Chapter 1 |
| 2 | Aug 23 | History of Evaluation | Discussion 2-Intital Response Due Aug 26 Peer Response Due Aug 30  Assignment #1 DUE: Evaluation Approach Infographic | Chapters 2 |
| 3 | Aug 30 | Evaluation Ethics | Discussion 3-Intital Response Due Sept 2 Peer Response Due Sept 6  PC #1 DUE: Program narrative | Chapter 3 |
| 4 | Sept 6 | Evaluation Ideologies and Approaches | Discussion 4-Intital Response Due Sept 9 Peer Response Due Sept 13  PC #2 DUE: Draft logic model | Chapter 4 |
| 5 | Sept 13 | Define – Understanding the Program | Discussion 5-Intital Response Due Sept 16 Peer Response Due Sept 20  PC #3 DUE: Program theory | Chapter 5 |
| 6 | Sept 20 | Define-Modeling the Program | Discussion 6-Intital Response Due Sept 23 Peer Response Due Sept 27  PC #4 DUE: Evaluation matrix with evaluation questions | Chapter 6 |

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| **Week** | **Date** | Topics and Assignments | | **Readings (Prior to Class)** |
| Topics | Assignments Due |
| 7 | Sept 27 | Plan- Planning the Evaluation | Discussion 7-Intital Response Due Sept 30 Peer Response Due Oct 4  PC #5 DUE: Evaluation design | Chapter 7 |
| 8 | Oct 4 | Plan -Designing the Evaluation | Discussion 8-Intital Response Due Oct 7 Peer Response Due Oct 11  Assignment #2 DUE: Methods Summary | Chapter 8 |
| 9 | Oct 11 | Implement: Implementing the Evaluation | Discussion 9-Intital Response Due Oct 14 Peer Response Due Oct 18  PC #6a DUE: Evaluation Matrix | Chapter 9 |
| 10 | Oct 18 | Implement: Analyzing the Data | Discussion 10-Intital Response Due Oct 21 Peer Response Due Oct 25  PC #6b DUE: Final evaluation matrix | Chapter 10 |
| 11 | Oct **25** | Interpret: Interpreting the Results | Assignment #3 DUE: Evaluation Critique | Chapter 11 |
| 12 | Nov 1 | Inform And Refine: Using Evaluation Results | PC #7 DUE: Evaluation plan | Chapter 12 |
| 13 | Nov 8 | Case Study Application | Appendix Discussion Due Initial Response Due Nov 1 Peer Response Nov. 8 | Chapter 13 |
| 14 | Nov 15 | FINAL PRESENTATIONS | Joanna, Lydia, Claire |  |
| 15 | Nov 29 | FINAL PRESENTATIONS | Jennifer, Bonnie, Kristin  Assignment #4 DUE: IRB Training Certificate |  |

This is a tentative schedule and serves only as an approximate guideline for the course topic.