USCPrice

Sol Price School of Public Policy
Graduate Programs in Public Administration

PPD 542

Policy and Program Evaluation

4 Units

Term
Fall 2021

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Table of Contents

Course Description

PPD 542 Policy and Program Evaluation (4 units)
"Methods and models for policy and program evaluation; methods of collecting and analyzing evaluation data; processes for linking evaluation to policy formulation and program management." ~ USC Catalogue

Program evaluation is the systematic investigation of social programs (including policies, plans, and regulations) to determine whether a particular program is achieving its objectives. By law, regulation, and custom, organizations must routinely evaluate how well their programs are working. For example, legislatures and interest groups frequently call upon evaluators to predict the consequences of proposed policies or to evaluate the outcomes of existing policies. Such knowledge promotes better decisions regarding whether programs should be continued, improved, expanded, or curtailed.

The most agile organizations can be described as "learning organizations"—continually adapting to new circumstances and information. Formal evaluation plays a pivotal role in helping organizations learn.

Knowledge of evaluation methods enables public administrators to:

a. Use evaluation findings to improve ongoing programs
b. Select and work with evaluation consultants to design an evaluation project
c. Write grant proposals to sponsor organizations that require performance monitoring
d. Critique evaluation studies cited by advocates in a policy debate

This course introduces students to the art and science of policy evaluation. Students will learn methods of collecting, analyzing, interpreting, and communicating information used in evaluation studies.

An explicit goal of the course is to provide students with the skills required for successful completion of the "capstone" course, *PPD 546 Professional Practice of Public Administration.* In both courses, students work in teams to develop an evaluation proposal related to an actual public policy or program implemented by a public or nonprofit agency. In this course, PPD 542, you will create an evaluation proposal for a mock client. In the capstone course, PPD 546, you will develop a similar proposal for a real client during the first few weeks, and then you will carry out your evaluation project during the same semester.

Course Objectives

Practical Learning Objectives:

This course trains students to "analyze, synthesize, think critically, and solve problems," which is one of the universal competencies for all programs accredited by the National Association of Schools of Public Affairs and Administration.

By the end of this course, you will be able to:

1. Read evaluation research. Demonstrate comprehension of an evaluation report by summarizing its statistical and practical conclusions, and by analyzing its methodological strengths and limitations.
2. Design evaluation research. Write an effective proposal to evaluate a policy or program. Use theory and a logic model to frame the proposed study. Describe the research design, data collection methods, and data analysis strategy for the proposed study.
3. Assess the ethical and political implications of an evaluation study, and describe how its results could inform policy or programmatic decisions.
4. Work in teams and manage projects. (Students will need to collaborate to complete the evaluation proposal assignment in an efficient and fair manner.)
5. Communicate professionally. (Students will work in teams to write a detailed evaluation proposal, and to create a media-rich oral presentation of the proposal in the form of a "pitch" to a mock client.)

Technical Learning Objectives:

By the end of this course, you will be able to:

1. Select a suitable research design (e.g. experimental, quasi-experimental, or nonexperimental) for an evaluation study.
2. Design a variable to measure a concept in a valid and reliable fashion.
3. Select and design suitable data collection methods such as surveys, interviews, focus groups, participant observation, content analysis, or collection of secondary data.
4. Select a suitable approach to data analysis and visualization, and carry out and interpret simple descriptive and inferential analyses of evaluation data.
5. Read research reports that use more complex data analysis techniques such as linear regression.

Textbooks and Materials

Texts to purchase:

> Fink, Arlene (2015) *Evaluation fundamentals: Insights into program effectiveness, quality, and value* (3rd ed.). Sage. ISBN: 978-1452282008 ISBN-10: 1452282005

> Bardach, Eugene and Eric M. Patashnik (2020) *A practical guide for policy analysis: The eightfold path to more effective problem solving* (6th ed.). Sage Publishers CQ Press. ISBN-13: 978-1506368887   ISBN-10: 1506368883

Texts to download:

> NSF [National Science Foundation]. (2010). *The 2010 user-friendly handbook for project evaluation.*
> http://www.informalscience.org/sites/default/files/TheUserFriendlyGuide.pdf

> GAO [US Government Accountability Office]. (2012). *Designing evaluations.* GAO-12-208G. http://www.gao.gov/assets/590/588146.pdf

Articles:

Besides the textbooks, required readings are supplied in the Readings folder in the course Toolbox. The files are named according to the first author of the publication. To find a specific reading by a particular author, sort the files by name.

Software:

Microsoft Excel (part of Microsoft Office), available free here:
https://itservices.usc.edu/officestudents/

Grading Policies

Grading Ranges for Final Course Grades

Grade	Range		Grade	Range
A	≥ 93%		C+	≥ 77%, < 80%
A-	≥ 90% < 93%		C	≥ 73%, < 77%
B+	≥ 87% < 90%		C-	≥ 70%, < 73%
B	≥ 83%, < 87%		D	≥ 60%, < 70%
B-	≥ 80%, < 83%		F	< 60%

Course Grade of Incomplete

Only when work is not completed because of documented illness or other "emergency" occurring after the 12th week of the semester (or 12th week equivalent for any course scheduled for fewer than 15 weeks) may the professor assign a course grade of Incomplete (IN). An "emergency" constitutes a situation or event that could not be foreseen, and which is beyond the student's control and which prevents the student from taking any final paper or exam or completing other work during the final weeks of class. A student may not request an Incomplete (IN) before the end of the 12th week (or 12th week equivalent for any course scheduled for fewer than 15 weeks).

Course Grade Components

Graded Activity Categories	Grading Scale (points possible)	Number of items in the category	Weight of each item in Course Grade	Category Weight in Course Grade
Short Essays & Discussion	20	12	2%	24%
Quizzes	10	10	1%	10%
Data Analysis Labs	100	3	5%	15%
Evaluation Proposal				
• Blogs	20	4	5%	20%
• Partial Draft (group)	n/a	1	n/a	Not Graded
• Full Draft Proposal (group)	n/a	1	n/a	Not Graded
• Final Evaluation Proposal (group)	100	1	21%	21%
• Project Pitch Video (group)	100	1	5%	5%
• CATME Teammate Assessment	20	1	5%	5%
TOTAL				**100%**

Graded Activity Categories

Individual Work (69%)

Short Essays & Discussion (24%): In response to discussion prompts that reference assigned readings or instructional materials, students will post their response by Day 5

of the week and will reply to two other students by Day 7. Twelve discussions are distributed across Weeks 1-3, 5-9, 13-14, 15(x2).

Quizzes (10%): Quizzes are designed to test your mastery of basic concepts introduced in the readings and lectures. Ten quizzes are assigned through Week 12.

Data Analysis Labs (15%): During Weeks 10, 11, and 12, which focus on data analysis, students will complete a data analysis "laboratory" assignment.

Blogs (20%): Blogs are a form of individual contribution to the group evaluation proposal. Blog assignments typically entail archival research to locate reference material to support the evaluation proposal, and individual reflections regarding how the group should proceed in crafting certain sections of the evaluation proposal (e.g., research questions, research design, data collection methods, data analysis methods). A total of five blogs are assigned in Weeks 4, 6, 8, 10, 12.

Group Work (31%)

The main team project is to develop an evaluation proposal related to an actual public policy or program implemented by a public or nonprofit agency. This project requires students to apply all of the concepts learned throughout the course to the dynamic and ambiguous environment of practical program evaluation.

NOTE: Students will not actually carry out an evaluation study. Rather, the assignment entails crafting a 15- to 20-page evaluation proposal that details the practical and theoretical questions to be answered by the study, and the research methods that could be used to answer the stated research questions.

In Week 3, the instructor will assign students to teams of approximately four students based on students' policy interests and other considerations that students will share through a brief survey administered during Week 1. Once team assignments are announced, students are expected to work with the team through the completion of the course. There will be no reassignment of students to other teams following the initial assignment. Should issues arise regarding team dynamics, the section instructor will work with the team to address these issues.

In Week 4, teams will meet with the section instructor to propose a policy or program to focus on for the duration of the semester. Additional team meetings with the section instructor will be scheduled in Weeks 6, 10, and 14.

A **partial draft** is due Week 11, and a **full draft** is due Week 13 so that teams can receive detailed feedback from the section instructor. The drafts are not graded, but groups that make more substantial progress with each draft will receive more substantial feedback from the instructor, and will have less work to complete in the final weeks of the course.

Project Pitch Video (5%): In Week 14, teams will prepare a 10-minute summary of the evaluation proposal in the form of a pitch to a mock client. The presentation must be recorded using VoiceThread and PowerPoint, or another video medium with prior instructor approval. This presentation should translate the technical material to make it understandable and compelling to a nonexpert political leader or public administrator.

Final Draft Evaluation Proposal (21%): In Week 15, teams will produce a professional-quality report, approximately 15–20 pages (single-spaced, including graphics), that details the proposed project.

CATME Teammate Assessment (5%): In Week 15, students will assess both their own and their teammates' contributions to the evaluation proposal assignment. All students are required to provide thoughtful assessments via an online survey administered by www.catme.org. Grades for this assignment will be informed by your teammates' evaluations of your contributions to group work. *(Note: The CATME survey is only one measure of teamwork. Students who do not contribute substantially to a group assignment will be penalized, including potentially a score of zero on the group assignment.)*

Grading Rubrics

Grading Rubric for Discussions and Blogs (20 points maximum)				
Criteria	Superior	Proficient	Partially Proficient	Unsatisfactory
Relevance, Application, Originality **(6 points)**	Addresses the question, uses ideas from the readings, and provides a unique perspective (6)	Addresses the question, uses ideas from the readings, usually has clear focus (5)	Addresses the question but with little substance, inconsistencies, or partial incoherence (3)	Fails to address the question posed, or incoherent (0)
Insight, Observation, Analysis (6 points)	Offers significant analysis and insight with clear understanding of the question (6)	Offers some analysis or insight with clear understanding of the question (5)	Addresses concepts already highlighted; rudimentary understanding of the question (3)	No clear concept addressed, lacks clarity of ideas, or shows minimal understanding of the question (0)
Details & Evidence (4 points)	Details and evidence are effective, illuminating, and pertinent to the question (4)	Details and evidence are elaborated and pertinent to the question (3)	Details and evidence are scant or repetitious (2)	Details are absent or tangential to the question (0)
Writing Style & Mechanics (4 points)	Writing style is clear, concise, inviting, and free of mechanical errors (4)	Some stylistic problems or mechanical errors (3)	Multiple errors or patterns of errors (2)	Errors are frequent and severe (0)

Grading Rubric for the Group Project Pitch Video in VoiceThread (100 points max)

Criteria	Superior	Proficient	Partially Proficient	Unsatisfactory
Content (40 points)	Coherent and well-organized presentation responsive to the assignment (40)	Coherent, with minor flaws in organization or responsiveness to the assignment (30 or 35)	Presentation lacked clarity or credibility, or contained significant errors (20 or 25)	Far below expectations for graduate work (0)
Visuals **(16 points)**	Engaging visuals help tell the story (Need not be elaborate if a minimalist theme is more appropriate) (16)	Appropriate visuals help tell the story, with few exceptions (11)	Visual elements lack clarity or distract from the presentation (6)	None or inappropriate (0)
Delivery (16 points)	Team members spoke *on video* with appropriate confidence, clarity, and enthusiasm, without exception (16)	Team members spoke *off camera* with appropriate confidence, clarity, and enthusiasm, with few exceptions (11)	A lack of confidence, clarity, or enthusiasm detracted from the presentation (6)	Delivery far below expectations for graduate work (0)
Collaborative Presentation **(16 points)**	Each teammate has a significant speaking role (16)	One teammate lacks a significant speaking role (11)	Two teammates lack a significant speaking role (6)	Only one teammate narrates the presentation (0)
Duration (10 points)	10-15 minutes for 4 or 5-person group; 8-12 minutes for 3-person groups (10)	<1 minute too short or too long (7)	1-2 minutes too short or too long (4)	>2 minutes too short or too long (0)
VoiceThread Settings (2 points)	Advance slides automatically (1 pt) Add your instructor as an author of the presentation (1 pt)			

Grading Rubric for Evaluation Proposal (100 points max)				
Overview & Objectives	**Superior**	**Proficient**	**Partially Proficient**	**Unsatisfactory**
Title and executive summary (5 points)	Descriptive and inviting title. Executive summary coherently describes all aspects of the proposal and builds the reader's enthusiasm for the proposed project. (5)	Descriptive title. Executive summary coherently describes all aspects of the proposal. (3)	Title or executive summary raise doubts about the quality of the proposal. (2)	Does not meet minimum standard of quality. (0)
Program or policy overview (10 points)	Identifies and describes program, and sites evidence in describing the issue or goals addressed, and key beneficiaries or stakeholders. (10)	Provides some detail about underlying issue or goals of program; target population; stakeholders. (7)	Identifies and describes program in general terms. (4)	Does not meet minimum standard of quality. (0)
Objectives and research questions (15 points)	Insightful and feasible research questions. Logic model is refined and well- grounded in the literature. (15)	Feasible and relevant research questions. Logic model illustrates how each question relates to programmatic logic. (12)	Questions relate to logic model but are general or infeasible to answer. (9)	Does not meet minimum standard of quality. (0)

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Research Methods	Superior	Proficient	Partially Proficient	Unsatisfactory
Research design and case selection (12 points)	A particularly insightful design with creative or innovative application of method to answer researchable questions. (12)	Research design is essentially complete; data proposed will address primary researchable questions. (9)	Research design is incomplete, contains flaws or biases not acknowledged; does not relate specific designs to researchable questions. (6)	Does not meet minimum standard of quality. (0)
Data collection, sampling, and measurement (12 points)	Particularly well-designed data collection instruments; will produce valid and reliable measures needed to answer specific research questions. (12)	Clearly designed instruments with few errors and that relate to researchable questions. (9)	Instruments are not specific or have issues of construction. (6)	Does not meet minimum standard of quality. (0)
Data analysis (10 points)	Refined and sophisticated statistical methods; will clearly provide usable knowledge. (10)	The statistical methods are supported by design and clearly relate to the researchable questions. (7)	Statistical methods proposed are too general, ad hoc, or do not dovetail with the design. (4)	Does not meet minimum standard of quality. (0)
Methodological reflection (10 points)	An insightful critique on grounds of internal/external validity, error, and/or bias. Discusses how the design addresses vulnerabilities. (10)	A solid critique of evaluation on grounds of internal and external validity and/or potential error and bias. (7)	Partial conceptual understanding and application of internal and external validity. (4)	Does not meet minimum standard of quality. (0)

Products, Significance, Logistics	Superior	Proficient	Partially Proficient	Unsatisfactory
Evaluation products and policy significance (5 points)	Innovative deliverables and a compelling argument about the importance of the evaluation. (5)	Adequate deliverables and a reasonable argument about the importance of the evaluation. (3)	Some discussion of the evaluation deliverables and importance. (2)	Does not meet minimum standard of quality. (0)
Workflow: Timeline and budget (5 points)	Exceeds expectations described in the evaluation outline. (5)	Meets expectations described in the evaluation outline. (3)	Partially meets expectations described in the evaluation outline. (2)	Does not meet minimum standard of quality. (0)
Appendices and references cited (5 points)	Exceeds expectations described in the evaluation outline. (5)	Meets expectations described in the evaluation outline. (3)	Partially meets expectations described in the evaluation outline. (2)	Does not meet minimum standard of quality. (0)
Presentation	Superior	Proficient	Partially Proficient	Unsatisfactory
Organization and visual elements (5 points)	Well organized. Attractive and innovative use of text/graphic elements to include display of data; flow charts; maps, etc. Graphic elements help drive argument. Visual elements properly titled and discussed in text. (5)	A logically structured product. Incorporates other visual elements such as charts, graphs, text charts, or other visual models to an adequate extent. (3)	Basic organization detracts from argument; uses only section headings and bullets to break up argument and direct reader through argument. (2)	Does not meet minimum standard of quality (0)
Writing mechanics & style (6 points)	Style and mechanics (punctuation, grammar, syntax) are well-polished. (6)	Satisfactory mechanics and style. (4)	Multiple errors in grammar or syntax. (2)	Does not meet minimum standard of quality (0)

Other Policies

Weekly Structure

The course is organized into 15 week-long units. Each day of the week is numbered 1 through 7. Wednesday is always the first day of the week:

Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5	Day 6	Day 7
Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday

Due dates for all assignments are stated in day numbers. **Assignments are due no later than 11:55 p.m.** in the Pacific Time zone on the day that is stated within the assignment page and the weekly activity table*.*

File Submission Protocol

All file submissions will be handled electronically through Blackboard. The final evaluation proposal will be submitted within Blackboard using the embedded Turnitin service which evaluates the text for potential plagiarism. In the event of electronic submission problems, you may provide duplicate submissions via e-mail as a matter of record of your timely submission.

Late Assignments

No assignments are accepted after their due dates without prior permission. At their discretion, faculty may grant extensions for extenuating circumstances, as defined in the USC student handbook. If you are unable to complete an assignment on time, please notify your instructor as soon as feasible. Please communicate with your instructor if you find yourself falling behind or if you need any assistance with an assignment.

Form and Style for All Written Work

Write in plain, concise prose (such as described in Strunk and White's classic *Elements of Style*). Provide in-text author-date citations for all ideas, phrasing, or facts you borrow from other sources. Include page numbers in citations wherever feasible; if your citation is especially insightful, novel, or contentious, your instructor or classmates may wish to look it up. Provide a list of cited references in APA format. Err on the side of being too inclusive in your citations of facts and ideas included in your work. It is good professional practice to guide your readers to your source materials, and liberal citations will avoid plagiarism allegations.

Uploaded text files should be single-spaced.

Live Sessions

This course has one plenary live session in Week 1 and four small-group consultations with the section instructor to discuss the Evaluation Proposal assignment in Weeks 4, 6, 10, and 14.

Live sessions take place in Zoom. For details on how to join the live sessions, refer to the **Live Session Schedule** in the LMS.

Statement on Academic Conduct and Support Systems

Academic Conduct:

Plagiarism – presenting someone else's ideas as your own, either verbatim or recast in your own words – is a serious academic offense with serious consequences. Please familiarize yourself with the discussion of plagiarism in SCampus in Part B, Section 11, "Behavior Violating University Standards" policy.usc.edu/scampus-part-b. Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable. See additional information in SCampus and university policies on scientific misconduct, policy.usc.edu/research-and-scholarship-misconduct/

Support Systems:

Student Health Counseling Services - (213) 740-7711 – 24/7 on call
engemannshc.usc.edu/counseling
Free and confidential mental health treatment for students, including short-term psychotherapy, group counseling, stress fitness workshops, and crisis intervention.

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline - 1 (800) 273-8255 – 24/7 on call
suicidepreventionlifeline.org
Free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Services (RSVP) - (213) 740-4900 – 24/7 on call
engemannshc.usc.edu/rsvp
Free and confidential therapy services, workshops, and training for situations related to gender-based harm.

Office of Equity and Diversity (OED) | Title IX - (213) 740-5086
equity.usc.edu, titleix.usc.edu
Information about how to get help or help a survivor of harassment or discrimination, rights of protected classes, reporting options, and additional resources for students, faculty, staff, visitors, and applicants. The university prohibits discrimination or harassment based on the following protected characteristics: race, color, national origin, ancestry, religion, sex, gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation,

age, physical disability, medical condition, mental disability, marital status, pregnancy, veteran status, genetic information, and any other characteristic which may be specified in applicable laws and governmental regulations.

Bias Assessment Response and Support - (213) 740-2421
usc-advocate.symplicity.com/care_report/index.php/pid135372?
Incidents of bias, hate crimes and microaggressions need to be reported allowing for appropriate investigation and response.

The Office of Student Accessibility Services - (213) 740-0776
osas.usc.edu/
Support and accommodations for students with disabilities. Services include assistance in providing readers/notetakers/interpreters, special accommodations for test taking needs, assistance with architectural barriers, assistive technology, and support for individual needs.

USC Support and Advocacy - (213) 821-4710
studentaffairs.usc.edu/ssa
Assists students and families in resolving complex personal, financial, and academic issues adversely affecting their success as a student.

Diversity at USC - (213) 740-2101
diversity.usc.edu
Information on events, programs and training, the Provost's Diversity and Inclusion Council, Diversity Liaisons for each academic school, chronology, participation, and various resources for students.

USC Emergency - UPC: (213) 740-4321, HSC: (323) 442-1000 – 24/7 on call
dps.usc.edu, emergency.usc.edu
Emergency assistance and avenue to report a crime. Latest updates regarding safety, including ways in which instruction will be continued if an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible.

USC Department of Public Safety - UPC: (213) 740-6000, HSC: (323) 442-120 – 24/7 on call
dps.usc.edu
Non-emergency assistance or information.

Weekly Activity Schedule

Week 1: Introduction to Policy and Program Evaluation	Due Date
Learning Objectives ● Define program evaluation and describe its roles in public administration. ● Identify the types of program evaluation to be examined further throughout the course.	~

Readings
● Fink, A. (2015). *Evaluation fundamentals*. Sage Publications.
  ○ Chapter 1: "Program Evaluation: A Prelude," pp. 3–23 *only*
● NSF. (2010). *The 2010 user-friendly handbook for project evaluation.*
  ○ Introduction, plus Chapters 1–2, pp. 1–14
● GAO. (2012). *Designing evaluations.*
  ○ Chapter 1, pp. 1–9
● Emerson, J. (2009, Winter). "But does it work? How best to assess program performance." *Stanford Social Innovation Review*, 29–30.
	~

Instructional Materials ● Week 01 Lecture 1: What is Policy and Program Evaluation (18:50) ● Week 01 Lecture 2: Overview of Activities and Assignments (10:58)	~
Week 01: Live Session	Day 1
Week 01 Discussion 1: Introductions	*Initial*: Day 5 *Replies*: Day 7
Week 01 Assignment 1: Interest Area Survey	Day 5
Week 01 Quiz 1	Day 7

Week 2: Program Theory, Logic Models, and Hypotheses	Due Date
Learning Objectives ● Describe the theory and logic underlying a given policy or program. ● Construct a logic model for a policy/program. ● Identify researchable questions and hypotheses for a policy/program. ● Identify independent and dependent variables in causal hypotheses.	~
Readings ● Fink, A. (2015). *Evaluation fundamentals*. Sage Publications. ○ Chapter 1: "Program Evaluation: A Prelude" pp. 24–38 *only* ● NSF. (2010). *The 2010 user-friendly handbook for project evaluation.*	~

○ Chapter 3 "The Evaluation Process—Getting Started," pp. 15–30 *only* ● GAO. (2012). *Designing evaluations.* ○ "Chapter 2: Defining the Evaluation's Scope," pp. 10–17 Evaluation Example: ● Chen, G., & Warburton, R. N. (2006). Do speed cameras produce net benefits? Evidence from British Columbia, Canada. *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management,* 25, 661–678. Recommended (optional): ● Gienapp, A., Reisman, J., & Stachowiak, S. (2009). *Getting started: A self-directed guide to outcome map development.* Casey Foundation. ● Kellogg Foundation. (2004). *Logic model development guide: Using logic models to bring together planning, evaluation, and action.* ● Gervais, C., de Montigny, F., Lacharité, C., & Dubeau, D. (2015). The Father Friendly Initiative Within Families: Using a logic model to develop program theory for a father support program. *Evaluation and Program Planning,* 52, 133–141. ● Yin, R. K. (1998). Chapter 8, The abridged version of case study research. In L. Bickman & D. J. Rog (Eds.), *Handbook of applied social research methods.* Sage Publications.	
Instructional Materials ● Week 02 Lecture 1: Policies and Programs as Hypotheses (11:58) ● Week 02 Lecture 2: Logic Models (22:02) ● "Logic Models" by Dr. Jennifer Miller and Gregory Johnson, November 19, 2020 (13:40)	~
Week 02 Discussion 1: Theory, Logic Models, Hypothesis	*Initial*: Day 5 *Replies*: Day 7
Week 02 Checkpoint: New student groups	~
Week 02 Quiz 1	Day 7

Week 3: Evaluation Designs: True-, Quasi-, and Nonexperimental	Due Date
Learning Objectives ● Explain the relative strengths and weaknesses of experimental and nonexperimental research designs for detecting cause-and-effect relationships. ● Define internal validity and external validity, and discuss how research design affects both. ● Discuss the practical and ethical constraints of different types of research designs.	~

Readings
● Fink, A. (2015). *Evaluation fundamentals*. Sage Publications.
   ○ Chapter 3: "Designing Program Evaluations," pp. 67–100
 	
Evaluation Examples (choose one):
● HHS [U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services]. (2010). Head Start impact study, final report: Executive summary. 35 pages.
● Chiang, H. S., Clark, M. A., & McConnell, S. (2017). Supplying disadvantaged schools with effective teachers: Experimental evidence on secondary math teachers from Teach for America. *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management, 36*(1), 97–125 (skip or skim pp. 110–120).
● Steele, J. L., Murnane, R. J., & Willett, J. B. (2010). Do financial incentives help low-performing schools attract and keep academically talented teachers? Evidence from California. *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management, 29*(3), 451–478.
 	
Recommended (optional):
● GAO. (2012). *Designing evaluations.*
   ○ Chapter 3: "The Process of Selecting an Evaluation Design," pp. 18–30
   ○ "Chapter 4: "Designs for Assessing Program Implementation and Effectiveness," pp. 31–49
● Hausmann, R. (2016, February 25). The problem with evidence-based policies. *Project Syndicate*.
● Berlin, G. L. (2016). Using evidence as the driver of policy change: The next steps in supporting innovation, continuous improvement, and accountability. Testimony before the Senate Finance Committee, May 10, 2016.
	~

Instructional Materials ● Week 03 Lecture 1: True Experiments and RCTs (22:39) ● Week 03 Lecture 2: Research Design Notation (32:13) ● Week 03 Lecture 3: Non-experimental Research Designs (23:59) ● Week 03 Lecture 4: Internal and External Validity (7:53) ● Week 03 Lecture 5: Threats to Internal Validity (29:21)	~
Week 03 Discussion 1: True Experiments and Quasi-experiments	*Initial*: Day 5 *Replies*: Day 7
Week 03 Quiz 1	Day 7

Week 4: Scoping, Problem Definition, and Researchable Questions	Due Date
Learning Objectives ● Identify and frame researchable questions based on the political and organizational context of the evaluation, feasibility considerations, the needs of the evaluation sponsor, and interests of key stakeholders.	~

● Develop a strategy for identifying key stakeholder groups, and involving them in the evaluation process as appropriate.	
Readings ● Fink, A. (2015). *Evaluation fundamentals*. Sage Publications. ○ Chapter 2: "Evaluations Questions and Evidence of Merit," pp. 39–66	~
Week 04 Live Session: Team meeting with section instructor	*TBD*
Week 04 Blog 1: Scope, Stakeholders, and Researchable Questions	Day 7

Week 5: Sampling and Measurement	Due Date
Learning Objectives ● Explain the purpose of sampling; describe the strengths and limitations of various types of sampling strategies. ● Compare and contrast random sampling versus random assignment. ● Operationalize a concept by designing valid and reliable measures. ● Use indexes and scales to develop measures with content validity.	~

Readings
● Fink, A. (2015). *Evaluation fundamentals*. Sage Publications.
    ○ Chapter 4: "Sampling," pp. 101–110
    ○ Chapter 6: "Evaluation Measures," pp. 147–164
<u>Evaluation Example</u>:
● Leach, W. D., Pelkey, N. W., & Sabatier, P. A. (2002). Stakeholder partnerships as collaborative policymaking: Evaluation criteria applied to watershed management in California and Washington. *Journal of Policy Analysis & Management, 21*(4), 645–670.
	~

Instructional Materials ● Week 05 Lecture 1: Sampling (19:59) ● Week 05 Lecture 2: Measurement (31:39) ● Week 05 Lecture 3: Indexes and Scales (11:48) ● "Validity Threats" by Elizabeth Selin, April 3, 2012 (2:51)	~
Week 05 Discussion 1: Sampling and Measurement	*Initial*: Day 5 *Replies*: Day 7
Week 05 Quiz 1 – Valid and Reliable Measurement	Day 7
Week 05 Quiz 2 – Random Sampling and Random Assignment	Day 7

Week 6: Data Collection I: Surveys, Interviews, and Focus Groups	Due Date
Learning Objectives ● Explain the advantages and limitations of various types of data collection methods including surveys, interviews, focus groups. ● Design data collection instruments, such as surveys and interview protocols, to measure variables in a valid and reliable fashion.	~

Readings
● Fink, A. (2015). *Evaluation fundamentals.* Sage Publications.
  ○ Chapter 5: "Collecting Information," pp. 119–130 *only*
● NSF. (2010). *The 2010 user-friendly handbook for project evaluation.*
  ○ Section 6: "Review and Comparison of Selected Techniques," pp. 58–61, 64–65 *only*
 	
Surveys (recommended readings)
● Krosnick, J. A., & Presser, S. (2010). Question and questionnaire design (Chapter 9). In *Handbook of survey research* (2nd ed.). Emerald Group Publishing.
● University of Wisconsin. (2010). Survey fundamentals: A guide to designing and implementing surveys.
 	
Interviews (recommended readings)
● Hammer, D., & Wildavsky, A. (1993). The open-ended, semi-structured interview: An (almost) operational guide (Chapter 5). In A. Wildavsky, *Craftways.* Transaction Publishers.
● Leech, B. L. (2002). Asking questions: Techniques for semistructured interviews. *PS: Political Science and Politics, 35*(4), 665–668.
 	
Focus Groups (recommended readings)
● Asbury, J–E. (1995). Overview of focus group research. *Qualitative Health Research, 5*(4), 414–420.
● Cohen, J. (2000). Focus groups: A valuable tool for public policy. *California Research Bureau, CRB Note, 7*(1).
 	
Evaluation Example:
● Schachter, H. L., & Liu, R. (2005). Policy development and new immigrant communities: A case study of citizen input in defining transit problems. *Public Administration Review, 65*(5), 614–623.
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Instructional Materials ● Week 06 Lecture 1: Survey Design Overview (12:39) ● Week 06 Lecture 2: Writing Survey Questions (30:18) ● Week 06 Lecture 3: Survey Administration (17:34) ● Week 06 Lecture 4: Interviews and Focus Groups (21:42) ● "Fundamentals of Qualitative Research Methods: Interviews" by Leslie Curry, Yale University, June 23, 2015 (22:16) ● "Fundamentals of Qualitative Research Methods: Focus Groups"	~

by Leslie Curry, Yale University, June 23, 2015 (21:36)	
Week 06 Live Session: Team meeting with section instructor	*TBD*
Week 06 Discussion 1: Surveys, Interviews, Focus Groups	*Initial*: Day 5 *Replies*: Day 7
Week 06 Blog 1: Program Theory and Logic Model	Day 7
Week 06 Quiz 1	Day 7

Week 7: Data Collection II: Content Analysis and Misc. Techniques	Due Date
Learning Objectives ● Explain the advantages and limitations of data collection methods such as observation, content analysis, and secondary data. ● Perform content analysis to generate data from interview transcripts or audio-visual information.	~

Readings
● Fink, A. (2015)*. Evaluation fundamentals*. Sage Publications.
  ○ "Content Analysis," pp. 204–210
● Bardach, E., & Patashnik, E. (2015). *A practical guide for policy analysis: The eightfold path to more effective problem solving* (5th ed.). CQ Press.
  ○ Part II: "Assembling Evidence," pp. 83–112
Content Analysis (recommended readings)
● Campbell, J. L., Quincy, C., Osserman, J., & Pedersen, O. K. (2013). Coding in-depth semistructured interviews: Problems of unitization and intercoder reliability and agreement. *Sociological Methods & Research, 42*(3), 294–320.
● Garrison, D. R., Cleveland-Innes, M., Koole, M., & Kappelman, J. (2006). Revisiting methodological issues in transcript analysis: Negotiated coding and reliability. *The Internet and Higher Education, 9*(1), 1–8.
● Blair, B., Heikkila, T., & Weible, C. M. (2016). National media coverage of hydraulic fracturing in the United States: Evaluation using human and automated coding techniques. *Risk, Hazards & Crisis in Public Policy, 7*(3), 114–128.
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Instructional Materials ● Week 07 Lecture 1: Content Analysis (10:55) ● Week 07 Lecture 2: Other Data Collection Techniques (21:13)	~
Week 07 Discussion 1: Content Analysis	*Initial*: Day 5 *Replies*: Day 7
Week 07 Quiz 1	Day 7

Week 8: Case Studies	Due Date
Learning Objectives ● Define "case study" research. ● Define "unit of analysis." ● Describe how Robert Yin's principles of case study research can guide policy and program evaluation.	~
Readings ● Yin, R. K. (1998). The abridged version of case study research (Chapter 8). In L. Bickman & D. J. Rog (Eds.), *Handbook of applied social research methods*. Sage Publications. ● Fink, A. (2015). *Evaluation fundamentals*. Sage Publications. ○ Chapter 5: "Collecting Information," pp. 135–140 *only.*	~
Week 08 Discussion 1: Evaluation as Case Study Research	*Initial*: Day 5 *Replies*: Day 7
Week 08 Blog 1: Hypothesis and Research Design	Day 7

Week 9: Criteria and Alternatives Matrix Analysis	Due Date
Learning Objectives ● Construct a criteria alternatives matrix to aid public policy decisions. ● Describe the benefits and potential pitfalls of weighting each criterion to rank policy alternatives.	~

Readings
● Bardach, E., & Patashnik, E (2016). *A practical guide for policy analysis: The eightfold path to more effective problem solving* (5th ed.). CQ Press.
   ○ "Introduction," pp. xv–xix
   ○ Part I: "The Eightfold Path," pp. 1–82
● Munger, M. C. (2000). *Analyzing policy: Choices, conflicts, and practices.* W.W. Norton.
   ○ Chapter 1: "Policy Analysis as a Profession and a Process," pp. 3–29
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Instructional Materials ● Week 09 Lecture 1: CAM Analysis Overview (14:52) ● Week 09 Lecture 2: Criteria, Alternatives, and Weights (10:38) ● "Primer on Evaluation Criteria" by USC Price Professor Juliet Musso. 2014 (12:29)	~
Week 09 Discussion 1: Criteria Alternatives Analysis	*Initial*: Day 5 *Replies*: Day 7

Week 10: Data Analysis I: Descriptive Statistics and Data Visualization	Due Date
Learning Objectives ● Explain the differences between descriptive and inferential data analysis, and their implications for research design and data collection. ● Implement sound practices for data display and visualization.	~
Readings ● Fink, A. (2015). *Evaluation fundamentals*. Sage Publications. ○ Chapter 8: "Analyzing Evaluation Data," pp. 187–191 *only* ● Edward T. (2001). *The visual display of quantitative information* (2nd ed.). Graphics Press LLC. ○ Chapter 1: "Graphical Excellence" ○ Chapter 2: "Graphical Integrity" Recommended (optional): ● Bergstrom, C., & West, J. (2016). Visualization: Misleading axes on graphs. ● Johnson, G. (2002). Data analysis for description. In *Research Methods for Public Administrators*. Quorum Books. ● Patton, M. Q. (1999). Enhancing the quality and credibility of qualitative analysis. *Health Services Research*, *34*(5, Part 2), 1189. ● Miles, M. B., & Huberman, A. M. (1994). Qualitative data analysis: A sourcebook of new methods. Sage Publications. ○ Chapter 7: "Cross–Case Displays: Exploring and Describing"	~
Instructional Materials ● Week 10 Lecture 1: Descriptive Statistics (21:50) ● Week 10 Lecture 2: Data Visualization (17:10) ● Week 10 Lecture 3: Tutorial for Data Analysis Lab #1 (25:15)	~
Week 10 Live Session: Team meeting with section instructor	*TBD*
Week 10 Assignment 1: Data Analysis Lab 1	Day 5
Week 10 Blog 1: Data Collection: Samples, Measures, Instruments	Day 7
Week 10 Quiz 1	Day 7

Week 11: Data Analysis II: Comparing Means and Proportions	Due Date
Learning Objectives ● Test hypotheses by conducting and interpreting simple inferential analyses of evaluation data. ● Contrast statistical significance, effect size, and policy significance.	~

Readings
● Fink, A. (2015). *Evaluation fundamentals*. Sage Publications.
  ○ Chapter 8: "Analyzing Evaluation Data," pp. 187–199
● Newcomer, K. E., & Conger, D. (2010). Using statistics in evaluation (Chapter 20). In J. Wholey, H. Hatry, & K. Newcomer, (Eds.), *Handbook of practical program evaluation* (3rd ed., pp. 454–492). Jossey-Bass.
● Lane, D., et al. (n.d.). *Online statistics education: An interactive multimedia course of study.*
  ○ XI. "Logic of Hypothesis Testing" http://onlinestatbook.com/2/logic_of_hypothesis_testing/logic_hypothesis.html
  ○ XII "Tests of Means" http://onlinestatbook.com/2/tests_of_means/testing_means.html
  ○ XVII "Chi-Square Contingency Tables" http://onlinestatbook.com/2/chi_square/contingency.html
Recommended (optional):
● Schmuller, J. (2013). *Statistical analysis with Excel for dummies.* (e-book available through USC) https://library.usc.edu/uhtbin/cgisirsi/?ps=zkz8o1aCug/DOHENY/237720203/9
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Instructional Materials ● Week 11 Lecture 1: Comparing Means and Proportions (23:57) ● Week 11 Lecture 2: T-Test, ANOVA, Chi-Square (17:00) ● Week 11 Lecture 3: Tutorial for Data Analysis Lab #2 - Part 1 (12:11) ● Week 11 Lecture 4: Tutorial for Data Analysis Lab #2 - Part 2 (8:16)	~
Week 11 Assignment 1: Data Analysis Lab 2	Day 5
Week 11 Assignment 2: Partial Draft of Evaluation Proposal	Day 7
Week 11 Quiz 1	Day 7

Week 12: Data Analysis III: Correlation Between Two or More Variables	Due Date
Learning Objectives ● Test hypotheses by conducting and interpreting simple inferential analyses of evaluation data. ● Calculate and interpret correlation coefficients correctly. ● Explain the utility and limitations of correlation for causal inference. ● Summarize the statistical and practical conclusions of studies that analyze data using linear regression models.	~

Readings
● Lane, D., et al. *Online statistics education: An interactive multimedia course of study.*
  ○ "Describing Bivariate Data" http://onlinestatbook.com/2/describing_bivariate_data/bivariate.html
  ○ "Regression" http://onlinestatbook.com/2/regression/regression.html
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Instructional Materials ● Week 12 Lecture 1: Correlation (12:19) ● Week 12 Lecture 2: Regression (20:06) ● Week 12 Lecture 3: Reading Regression Models (10:54) ● Week 12 Lecture 4: Choosing Statistical Techniques (7:43)	~
Week 12 Blog 1: Data Analysis and Design Matrix	Day 7
Week 12 Assignment 1 and 2: Data Analysis Lab 3 (two parts)	Day 5
Week 12 Quiz 1	Day 7

Week 13: Formative Evaluation	Due Date
Learning Objectives ● Articulate the purposes and differences between exploratory evaluation, formative evaluation, summative evaluation, performance management, and implementation assessment. ● Describe the key steps involved in formative evaluation and outcome monitoring.	~
Readings ● Rossi, P. H., Lipsey, M. W., & Freeman, H. E. (2004). *Evaluation: A systematic approach.* Sage Publications. ○ Chapter 6: "Assessing and Monitoring Program Processes," pp. 169–201 ● AHRQ [Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality]. (2013). Formative evaluation: Fostering real-time adaptations and	~

refinements to improve the effectiveness of patient-centered medical home interventions, pp.1–7.

Evaluation Example:

- Musso, J., et. al. (2002). Planning neighborhood councils in Los Angeles: Self-determination on a shoestring.

Recommended (optional):

- Nelson, G., et al. (2014). Early implementation evaluation of a multi-site housing first intervention for homeless people with mental illness: A mixed methods approach. *Evaluation and Program Planning, 43*, 16–26.

Instructional Materials ● "Formative Evaluation" by Professor Juliet Musso, 2015 (18:42)	~
Week 13 Discussion 1: Formative Evaluation	*Initial*: Day 5 *Replies*: Day 7
Week 13 Assignment 1: Full Draft of Evaluation Proposal	Day 7

Week 14: Incorporating Evaluation in Program and Policy Change	Due Date
Learning Objectives ● Communicate the goals, methods, and findings of an evaluation study to professional audiences.	~
Readings ● NSF. (2010). *The 2010 user-friendly handbook for project evaluation.* ○ Section 7: "A Guide to Conducting Culturally Responsive Evaluations," pp. 75–96 ● AEA [American Evaluation Association]. (2004). Guiding principles for evaluators. ● Wildavsky, A. (1972). The self-evaluating organization. *Public Administration Review, 32*(5), 509–520. Recommended (optional): ● Patton, M. Q. (2017). *Facilitating evaluation: Principles in practice.* Sage.	~
Instructional Materials ● "Incorporating Evaluation in Policy and Program Change" by USC Price Professor Juliet Musso, 2015 (22:01)	~
Week 14 Live Session: Team meeting with section instructor	*TBD*
Week 14 Discussion 1: Evaluation Efficacy and Ethics	*Initial*: Day 5 *Replies*: Day 7
Week 14 Assignment 1: Project Pitch (VoiceThread)	Day 7

Week 15: Evaluation Proposals: Final Draft	Due Date
Learning Objectives ● Write an effective evaluation proposal.	~
Week 15 Checkpoint: Course Evaluation	Day 7
Week 15 Discussion 1: Group Presentations Discussion	Day 5
Week 15 Discussion 2: Course Reflection	Day 5
Week 15 Assignment 1: Final Proposal	Day 7
Week 15 Assignment 2: CATME Teammate Assignment	Day 7