I. COURSE OBJECTIVES

This class is designed for the in-service and pre-service professional public manager and policy analyst, and it has five overall objectives:

Objective One: To understand the diverse purposes that program evaluations can serve and the wide range of environments in which evaluations are conducted, and the roles of evaluators in making evaluations useful and relevant to all the stakeholders;

Objective Two: To acquaint the practitioner with the conceptual issues and primary methods (including both quantitative and qualitative methods) for conducting evaluations, both to enable the practitioner to conduct sound program evaluations and to critique evaluations they oversee or read;

Objective Three: To develop conceptual and writing skills in constructing evaluation designs, choosing and using appropriate methods, developing appropriate objectives and sound measures, collecting data, and critiquing other evaluations, so that the practitioner will have confidence in tackling program evaluations;

Objective Four: To explore the actual and ideal roles of the evaluator in the executive and legislative policy processes; and

Objective Five: To learn how to successfully manage a program evaluation project to promote full utilization of the evaluation into the policy process, and to have the experience of actually conducting an evaluation of a public program.

If you need accommodation for a disability, please talk with me by the second class.
II. Course Requirements

Grading:
Evaluation Research Report: 35%
Two projects: 15% each for 30% total
Final Exam: 25%
Class Participation: 10%

The class will be interactive, thus it is important that you have completed the readings for each class session and come prepared to discuss the material. I hope that each week students will serve as co-discussion leaders for selected class materials; this will be finalized when I see how large the class is. There will be two short class homework-type projects, each counting 15% of the course grade. The final exam will be a take-home exam and will consist of several essay questions or evaluation critiques which will integrate major issues from the course; this will count 20% of the course grade. The evaluation research paper will be to conduct an evaluation of a program; this will be due the last day of class. You will give a 15 minute presentation of your project during the December 7th class. The evaluation report will count 35% of the course grade. The evaluation project will be discussed in greater detail in a handout and in class.

Please let me know if you will not be in class, as I do keep track of attendance. The student honor code is enforced in the class; if you are unfamiliar with it, please refer to the Student Handbook. If you see materials in the popular media or in your work place on program evaluation that you think are pertinent, please bring them in to share with me and the class.

Note: Please make every effort to type all course assignments. Neatly handwritten copies will be accepted. Please no binders; a staple in the top left-hand corner is very functional. Make and keep a copy for yourself of all class assignments you submit to me. Even with great care, sometimes things get lost.

III. COURSE TEXTS

The following three texts are required reading and can be purchased at the University Bookstore or Bill's Bookstore.


United Way of America, *Measuring Program Outcomes: A Practical Approach*, 1994. This can ordered for about $7.00 from 1-800-772-0008 Sales Service/America. It is Item Number 0989.
All of the readings marked with an * below are in a folder on the table in the student lounge. Please copy these en toto at one time so they do not get mixed up and out of order. There is a copy center on the second floor of Bellamy.

IV. CLASS SCHEDULE: TOPICS AND ASSIGNED READINGS

Aug. 28  INTRODUCTION AND COURSE OVERVIEW; WHERE EVALUATION IS USED AND CONDUCTED

Topics to Cover: History of program evaluation; review of what we will cover in the class; discussion of class format and assignments; a discussion of the offices in the federal government that conduct program evaluation and their functions and emphases as well as a comparison of similar offices and functions at the state and local government level and an introduction to each other.

Sept. 4  TYPES AND PURPOSES OF EVALUATION; EVALUATION ETHICS

Royse, et.al., Program Evaluation, Chapters 1 and 2
The Program Evaluation Standards, U-1, U-2, U-4, P-3, P-4 and P-7

Topics to cover: What is a program evaluation anyway?; the different classifications and characteristics of program evaluations; how evaluations are used in the policy and management process and for what purposes; designing evaluations that will be utilized in the various settings you will conduct evaluations.

Sept. 11-18  CHALLENGES AND ALTERNATIVES TO QUANTITATIVE METHODS: QUALITATIVE METHODS IN EVALUATION

Week One—Sept 11: Assumptions and Core Methods; Issues in Credibility

*Guba and Lincoln, Chapter 1 (partial) and 2 from Fourth Generation Evaluation
Royse, et.al., Program Evaluation, Chapter 4
Michael Patton, How To Use Qualitative Methods in Evaluation (p. 1-69)
The Program Evaluation Standards, A-8 and A-9
Week two—Sept. 18:  Methods: Focus Groups, Trained Observer Ratings and Others


Michael Patton, *How To Use Qualitative Methods in Evaluation* (pp. 70 on; entire book)

**Topics to cover:** An introduction to the epistemological debate over the roles of positivism and grounded theory in program evaluation; understanding what grounded theory means; data collection and measurement issues; the requisites for good measures and appropriate measures for different types of evaluation methods; a basic review of qualitative methods and data collection techniques for evaluation, including in-depth interviews, focus groups, participant observation; discussion about when to use qualitative and quantitative techniques and their various strengths in program assessment/evaluation;

**September 18  PAPER PROPOSAL DUE**

**September 25 THE PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICE OF CAUSAL INFERENCE; USING LOGIC MODELS**

*Langbein, Chapters 3 and 4

* United Way *Measuring Program Outcomes*, Chapters 1 and 2

**Topics to cover:** How to establish causal inference and why it is important in an evaluation research design; understanding logic models and how to develop them to illustrate the causal linkages among activities, subobjectives or short term outcomes, and longer term outcomes; should all evaluations be causally directed?

**October 2  MEASUREMENT; SCALING; INSTRUMENTS**

Royse, et.al., *Program Evaluation*, Chapters 7, 11 and 12


**October 9 Specifying and Collecting Data on Indicators; Getting Customer/Client Input through surveys**

United Way *Measuring Program Outcomes*, Steps (Chapters) 3-5, Appendix

Royse, et.al., *Program Evaluation*, Chapter 8

**Topics to Cover:** How to specify indicators for your logic model outcomes; methods of collecting data, focusing particularly on the citizen survey; developing a trial outcomes measurement system and steps for implementation

**October 16** NEEDS ASSESSMENTS; PROCESS EVALUATIONS, and ASSESSING PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION

Royse, et.al., *Program Evaluation*, Chapters 3 and 5


**Topics to cover:** Assessing whether a program or treatment is implemented before/during your evaluation; understanding the impact that program implementation has on program evaluation; dealing with problems you can encounter when implementation is not going well; learning how to conduct a process evaluation and an evaluability assessment

**October 16** First Written Project Due

**October 23** Research Designs: EXPERIMENTAL AND NON-EXPERIMENTAL DESIGNS

* Bingham and Felbinger, pp. 17-20 and Chapter 4.


**Topics to cover:** Properties of experiments; the logic of experimental design, including the importance of random assignment; threats to internal validity; external validity; participation in programs, including bias and program coverage

**Topics to cover:** Using statistical procedures (e.g. multiple regression) to remove the effects of potentially confounding or spurious variables in program evaluation
Suggested Reading: Policy Studies Using Non-Experimental Designs


**October 30 Research Designs: QUASI-EXPERIMENTAL DESIGNS**

**Interrupted Time-series**


**Regression -Discontinuity**

Chapter 7, Wholey, pp. 144-151 and 431-441
*The Program Evaluation Standards*, F-1 and F-2

**Topics to cover:** Choosing different designs based on the evaluation needs; strengths and weaknesses of quasi-experimental designs; how to maximize the strengths of the different designs; data and methods requirements for the different designs; learning how to conceptualize and execute the interrupted time series and regression-discontinuity designs.

**November 6 Second Written Project Due**

**November 6 Analyzing Data**

Royse, et.al., *Program Evaluation*, Chapter 14
United Way *Measuring Program Outcomes*, Step (Chapter) 6

**November 13 COST BENEFIT AND COST EFFECTIVENESS DESIGNS**

Royse, et.al., *Program Evaluation*, Chapter 10
* Bingham and Felbinger, Chapter 13
* Ken Meier, "The Limits of Cost Benefit Analysis"
*The Program Evaluation Standards*, F-3

**Topics to cover:** role of cost benefit and cost effectiveness designs in policy analysis and program evaluation; issues to consider in conducting cost benefit and cost effectiveness designs and methodology for each.

**November 21** THE RFP, PROPOSAL AND REPORT WRITING, and MANAGING AN EVALUATION
**Program Evaluation Standards**, P-1, P-2, P-6, U-5, U-6, and U-7


*U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, "Cooperative Agreements for Research Demonstration Projects on Alcohol and other Drug Abuse Treatment for Homeless Persons", Request for Application, Selected Pages

*Pages from "Program Planning and Proposal Writing" from the Grantsmanship Center by Norton Kiritz

**Topics to cover**: basic introduction to writing an evaluation proposal; sources of information for tracking evaluation requests for proposals (RFPs), roles for contract management, gantt charts and project management; developing an evaluation budget.

**NOVEMBER 27    MAKING EVALUATIONS USEFUL**

United Way *Measuring Program Outcomes*, Step (Chapter) 8


**Other Readings to be Assigned**

**December  5    FINAL PROJECT DUE**

**December 5  Class Wrap-up, IN-CLASS REPORTS on Projects (10-15 minutes each)**

**December 10-14  FINAL EXAM WEEK**