

Program Evaluation  
07.642  
Online Course  
Spring 2012

Jill H. Lohmeier, Ph.D.  
516 O'Leary Library  
(978)934-4617  
Jill\_Lohmeier@uml.edu

Office Hour (online chat):  
**Thursday 2:30 – 3:30 p.m. EDT**

*Course Objectives:*

By the end of the semester, you should be able to:

- 1) Identify and discuss several models of program evaluation.
- 2) Understand what needs to be considered and addressed in a needs assessment.
- 3) Be able to identify an appropriate design for an evaluation.
- 4) Complete tasks important in creating an evaluation plan.
- 5) Become comfortable presenting ideas and plans to stakeholders.
- 6) Understand how evaluation results can be useful for program decision making.

*Textbooks:*

Posovac, E. J. (2011). Program evaluation: methods and case studies. 8<sup>th</sup> Edition. Upper Saddle River, New Jersey: Prentice Hall. **ISBN-10:** 0205804977

- **ISBN-13:** 978-205804979

The 2010 User Friendly Handbook for Project Evaluation. (2010). The National Science Foundation. This book may be obtained for FREE!! by logging onto [www.nsf.gov](http://www.nsf.gov). There is a section called publications. **Do this today.**

*Class format and tone:*

The class, like good program evaluation, is dependent upon collaboration among the stakeholders (you), the program director (me) and the evaluators (us). You will be asked to lead online discussions, contribute to discussions, and create and post materials for presentation. Although I hope to teach you many things about evaluation, you are ultimately responsible for what you learn in the class. So come online ready to contribute and learn! I will be available every week during my chat time from 2:30 to 3:30 pm EDT on Thursday. If you can not make this time, but would like to chat with me either online or on the phone, please email me and let me know! The new week will begin on Mondays at 8:00 am, with the exception of the first week, which begins on Tuesday. You will have until the following Monday at 8:00 a.m. to post responses to discussion questions.

The central tenets of our conceptual framework, Education for Transformation, at the Graduate School of Education at UMass Lowell are *Excellence, Equity, Inquiry and Collaboration*. In this class we will strive to create an online environment in which those

values are essential. Our collaborative learning environment will center around the inquiry and equity of the students in the class, as well as respect for equity and the use of inquiry as we work with programs to help create evaluation plans outside of class. Your work both in the classroom and with program directors and/or stakeholders for the programs you will be working with is expected to reflect your desire for educational excellence.

#### Schedule

Week	Topic	Reading(s)
Jan 23 – Jan 29	Introduction to course, Overview	Chapter 1
Jan 30 – Feb 5	Planning an evaluation	Chapter 2 NSF pp 1 – 13
Feb 6 – 12	Developing and Using Program Theory, Measures of Implementation and Outcomes <b>February 12 is the last day to receive approval of program.</b>	Chapters 3 & 4 NSF pp 15 - 31
Feb 13 – 19	Ethics; Needs Assessments	Chapters 5 & 6 NSF 63 - 73
Feb 20 – 26	Program Monitoring <b>Assessment Paper DUE February 26 11:59 p.m. EDT</b>	Chapter 7
Feb 27 – March 3	Single Group Designs; Quasi-Experimental Approaches	Chapters 9 & 10
March 4 – March 10	Conducting Research while Evaluating: Qualitative and Quantitative Methods	Chapters 8 & 11 NSF pp 43 – 62
March 11 – 17	<b>SPRING BREAK</b>	
March 18 –24	Cost Analyses & Evaluation Reports	Chapters 12 & 13 NSF pp 31 - 42
March 25 – 31	Encouraging Utilization <b>Final Presentations/Evaluation Plans Due March 25 5:00 p.m. EDT</b>	Chapter 14
April 1 – April 6	<b>FINAL EXAM</b>	

NOTE: Other readings may be assigned as the semester progresses.

*Evaluation of learning:*

Your grade will be determined based on the following scores:

22% Program Assessment Paper

10% Discussion Leading

30% Evaluation Plan (Presentation materials, Executive Summary, Budget, Timeline, References)

15% Class participation in Discussion Sessions

2% Participation in at least one Chat session

21% Final Exam

*Course Requirements:*

- 1) Online discussion leader. You will collaborate online with one other student to create discussion questions one week. You will each be expected to lead the discussion for **one** question that you two decide to post. This means that you must carefully read all responses to “your” question and respond appropriately to the comments and questions your classmates post. **You will be required to post your discussion questions by 8:00 am on Monday of the week you are assigned. You should plan to get my approval for your discussion ideas by the Friday before your assigned discussion leading week** (unless you choose week 2!). You will be asked to complete an additional reading on your discussion topic, so that you can contribute additional knowledge to the discussion. **You must also post a summary of the discussion by the following Tuesday at 5:00 p.m.**
- 2) Class participation in Discussion Sessions. In addition to coming to each discussion and chat prepared to discuss the readings, you will be expected to contribute at least two ideas or comments on others’ ideas each week. Your comments/ideas must be relevant to the topic of the week and indicate that you did complete the readings and/or assignments for the week. See the document entitled Class Discussions and Chats in the Course Resources folder for more detailed information about the grading scheme for discussion participation.
- 3) Final exam. The exam will be comprehensive, and it will include essay and a few short answer questions. It will be posted by 5:00 p.m. EDT March 29 and must be completed **by April 6** (5:00 p.m.) EDT.
- 4) Program Assessment Paper & Evaluation Plan. You will be required to find a program to work with this semester in order to create an evaluation plan. This may be a program that you are currently working with, or it may be a new program to you. **You need to get approval from me by February 12 and you must meet with the program director prior to February 20.** You will probably need to meet with the program director a few times during the semester. You will ultimately give them a copy of your evaluation plan and/or present to them your findings.

The papers that you turn in must be in 12 point Times New Roman or Courier font.

The **program assessment paper (due Feb. 26)** must be **no more than 7** double spaced pages, including any figures and graphs. The point of this paper is to allow you to assess the program’s need for an evaluation. It will also indicate that you are thoroughly familiar with the program. Your paper must include a program description that states the primary purpose of the program, the needs of the program, the mission, a description of the stakeholders and their roles in the program, and any other any relevant program issues. You will also need to include a description of any evaluation activities that have already been done or are currently being done for the program and an assessment of those evaluations. You must clearly explain why an evaluation plan is needed for the program. You must have a title page and references that are formatted according to APA style. The title page, reference and any appendices are not included in the page count.

The **evaluation plan (due March 25)** must include evaluation questions and hypotheses, the design and criteria, the analysis plan (including a schedule), a budget and plan for dissemination of results. Your plan must be based on a literature review and material covered in class. You will be required to post a PowerPoint presentation of the plan with

the stakeholders as the presumed audience. You will also turn a brief written description of the plan which may be **no more than 7** double spaced pages, plus a budget, timeline and a list of references.

*Grading Scale*

The overall grading system for the course is based on the system below. Please note that the UMass system now uses the A+ to B system for graduate standard work.

Grade	GPA	Point structure	Comment
A+	4.0	99-100	Work of the highest professional standard demonstrating independent and exemplary performance
A	4.0	95-98	Excellent work demonstrating independent and high quality performance.
A-	3.7	91-94	Very good work, carefully executed, but requiring some areas of improvement.
B+	3.3	86-90	Good work, indicating careful thought and attention to the task, yet requiring several areas of improvement.
B	3.0	80-85	Work of graduate standard, but omissions exist or careful analysis is not in evidence.
Below Graduate Standard			
B-	2.7	76-79	Effort is evident, but work indicates lack of understanding of the demands of the task.
C+	2.3	70-75	Poor quality work with little attention to detail and the demands of the task.
C	2.0	65-69	Work of very poor quality, indicating no understanding of the depth of analysis required.
F	0.0	Below 65	Serious neglect or evidence of cheating.

Academic misconduct will NOT be tolerated. Be sure to read the posted document in the Course Resource folder on the university's policies on academic misconduct carefully.

