Program Evaluation and Design
Robert Milano Graduate School
Of Management &
Urban Policy (CRN# 1424)

Instructor: Ian A. Beckford, Ed.D.
Spring 2010 Saturday 10:00am-11:50am
Class located at 6 East 16th Street, Room 910
Office Hours: by appointment
Contact information:

917-796-4257
e-mail: ILBECKFORD@AOL.COM

Course Description

Each year the Federal government spends over $1 billion dollars on the Head Start program for young children. How well does it prepare kids for school? Could it do better? In fiscal year 2001, New York spent $17 million on intensive supervision probation to control nonviolent felons. Does this program protect the public and rehabilitate the offenders? The City of New York provides $5 million in child care subsidies to low-income parents. Is this money well spent? Should we spend more?

To an increasing extent, public policymakers and managers rely on program evaluation to answer questions like these. Though modern evaluation began in the field of education, it is now utilized in a wide variety of contexts and arenas. This course will provide a general introduction to evaluation, from different ways to approach evaluation to some specific methods used. More importantly, by focusing on a number of social policy/program evaluations, the course aims to introduce students with a variety of cross-disciplinary evaluation approaches. While there is no ideal way to conduct evaluation in the real world, the course offers an integrated evaluation framework that blends quantitative and qualitative perspectives. The course also intends to sensitize students to the larger political, administrative and ethical issues in conducting evaluation.

Required Textbook[1]

Evaluation: A Systematic Approach (7Th Edition) by Rossi, Lipsy, and Freeman

Additional Note:

Please note that this course syllabus, presentation articles, Requests for Proposal, and case studies can all be found on Blackboard under my this course name.

[1] Please note additional readings will be assigned during the semester that are related to specific topics.

Course Requirements and Grading:

Each student is expected to read all assigned readings, and participate in class discussions. Each week guideline questions will be distributed. These questions will guide the discussions that occur in class. ***All students are expected to participate in these discussions***.

Each assignment is due on the assigned date. The submission of late work will result in a half grade deduction from the original grade. For example, if you originally would have earned an ***"A"*** for a particular assignment, the grade will be reduced to an ***"A-"*** if the assignment is submitted after the assigned due date.

Midterm	15%	(***March 27th***)
Evaluation Proposal	20%	(***April 10th***)
Group Evaluation Project	20%	(***May 15th)***
Class participation[2]	30%	
Final Exam	15%	(***May 15th***)

[2] Your participation grade will be partly based on a group presentation of an article I assign.

EVALUATION PROPOSAL REPORT

Before an evaluation is conducted, a Request for Proposals (RFP) is written. Several agencies are invited to respond to the RFP in order to conduct this work. In order to understand the evaluation process, you need to be cognizant of RFPs and their responses. As part of this course, groups of students will be expected to write a (***not more than***) ten page response to a RFP that will be administered during the semester. Guidelines for writing the response will be discussed prior to receiving the RFP.

GROUP EVALUATION AND REPORT

Each student will be assigned to a group in order to assist a local non-profit organization in conducting an evaluation of one of their programs. Each group will submit a (***not more than 20 page***) report discussing key evaluation findings. More details about this project will be administered during the semester.

Please note that the following schedule is tentative. Depending on the pace of the course, dates are subject to change.

COURSE SCHEDULE

January 30th	Introduction
February 6th	An Overview of Program Evaluation ***Evaluation: A Systematic Approach*** ***Chapter 1***
February 13th	Tailoring Evaluations ***Evaluation: A Systematic Approach*** ***Chapter 2***
February 20th	Identifying Issues and Formulating Questions ***Evaluation: A Systematic Approach*** ***Chapter 3***
February 27th	Assessing the Need for a Program ***Evaluation: A Systematic Approach*** ***Chapter 4***
March 6th	Expressing and Assessing Program Theory ***Evaluation: A Systematic Approach*** ***Chapter 5***
March 13th	Assessing and Monitoring Program Process ***Evaluation: A Systematic Approach*** ***Chapter 6***
March 20th	***NO CLASS BECAUSE OF SPRING BREAK***
March 27th	***Midterm*** (covering Chapters 1 to 6 in Rossi and additional readings)
April 3rd	Measuring and Monitoring Program Outcomes ***Evaluation: A Systematic Approach*** ***Chapter 7*** Assessing Program Impact: Randomized Field Experiments ***Evaluation: A Systematic Approach*** ***Chapter 8***

April 10th	***Evaluation Proposals are due***
	Assessing Program Impact: Alternative Designs ***Evaluation: A Systematic Approach*** ***Chapter 9***
April 17th	Detecting, Interpreting, and Analyzing Program Effects ***Evaluation: A Systematic Approach*** ***Chapter 10***
April 24th	Measuring Efficiency ***Evaluation: A Systematic Approach*** ***Chapter 11***
May 1st	The Social Context of Evaluation ***Evaluation: A Systematic Approach*** ***Chapter 12***
May 8th	Evaluation's Role in Philanthropy and Policy **Discussion of Group Projects**
May 15th	**FINAL *(*IN CLASS*)*** ***SUBMITTING GROUP PROJECTS***