

**York University – Faculty of Liberal Arts and Professional Studies**  
**COURSE OUTLINE – ON-LINE DELIVERY**  
**AP/PPAS 4310 3.00 Fall 2020**  
**Program Evaluation I**

**Fully On-Line – Moodle/Zoom**

**Monday, 7:00pm-10:00pm (Synchronous delivery)**

**Course Director:** Dr. Peter P. Constantinou

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**Office hrs:** Immediately before or after class, or by appointment

**Note:** If you have a documented disability at York that you wish to have accommodated in this course, please see me immediately at the start of the course.

**Course Description:**

Provides students with the fundamental methodological tools necessary to evaluate the effectiveness of government programs, and includes a review of the extensive literature in this area. Students will learn techniques for evaluating assessments, and will learn to develop research designs for formative evaluations, summative evaluations and needs studies.

Prerequisites: AP/POLS 3300 6.00 or AP/PPAS 3300 6.00, or permission of the Instructor. Course credit exclusions: AP/POLS 4300 6.00, AP/PPAS 4300 6.00, GL/POLS 4300 6.00. Note: Students taking this course are strongly encouraged to also complete AP/PPAS 4320 3.00 offered in the subsequent term. The reason for this recommendation is that students typically work on the same program evaluation project in the two courses.

**Expected learning outcomes:**

Upon completing this course, students should be able to:

- Articulate policy research questions, search the literature, compile a relevant bibliography and identify potential data sources.
- Differentiate between different types of program evaluation, their objectives and methodological tools.
- Be aware of the limitations of program evaluation in terms of its design, methodology and practical feasibility, and interpret findings in a critical manner.
- Design and implement a suitable program evaluation scheme.
- Be aware of ethical issues in program evaluation.
- Communicate research findings in both oral and written format clearly and effectively.

**Teaching Methodology:**

This course is delivered entirely on-line. Although it is delivered on line, it aims to replicate a classroom experience through live video lectures, presentation slide materials, on-line live discussions, and interactive forums.

Classes will comprise various formats; lecture, class discussion, workshops and simulations. Lectures will provide the context for the readings, which should be completed before the date listed. Discussions will build on the readings and lecture material and all students are expected to actively participate. In a number of instances, workshops will be conducted where students will be charged with working together in groups to produce results/answers to questions/challenges presented in class. These workshops will focus on how to conduct/prepare various analyses and government documents

**About Moodle and Zoom**

Moodle is the learning platform used by York University to allow us to have a personalized learning platform/environment for our course. The free site allows us to access all the materials, such as slide decks, assignments and videos, as well as a secure site for us to upload student work for assessment.

Zoom is a free video conferencing software app that allows us to engage virtually for video, presentations, group work and chat rooms. More detail about these systems will be shared at the beginning of the course. Students shall note the following:

- Zoom is hosted on servers in the U.S. This includes recordings done through Zoom.
- If you have privacy concerns about your data, provide only your first name or a
- nickname when you join a session.
- The system is configured in a way that all participants are automatically notified when a session is being recorded. In other words, a session cannot be recorded without you knowing about it.

Technology requirements and FAQs for Moodle can be found here - <http://www.yorku.ca/moodle/students/faq/index.html>

*Students are strongly encouraged to prepare for class by completing the readings, participate in the discussion and take an active role in the workshops.*

**Evaluation:**

<b>Assignment</b>	<b>Value</b>	<b>Due Date</b>
Critical Literature Review (individual)	15%	Week 6
Class Presentation (individual)	10%	TBD
Evaluability Assessment Report (group)	40%	Week 12
In-class test (individual, closed-book)	20%	Week 11
Class Participation (individual)	15%	Throughout

**NOTE:** *All assignments are expected to be handed in on time. If you expect to have difficulty in completing an assignment on time, please discuss this with the instructor in advance of the due date. Otherwise, late penalties of 10% per day will be strictly applied and assignments will not be accepted after 3 days*

**Critical Literature Review**

The critical literature review should be 3-4 pages long (font 11, 1 ½ line spacing) on a public policy evaluation of your choice. Find about 3-4 articles or reports on the subject, identify the main question of analysis, summarize the approach of each of the papers and their findings, and critically assess the strengths and weaknesses of each paper. Suggestions for further research and policy recommendations should be outlined as well.

It is advisable that you seek timely guidance and feedback on your ongoing research efforts throughout the course.

**Evaluability Assessment:**

This exercise is a research design project where students are required to put together a proposal to evaluate a given program or public policy complete with objectives, methods and time lines to be implemented in AP/PPAS 4320 3.0 Advanced Program Evaluation in Winter 2019.

**Class Presentation:**

Your class presentation can be based on a published program evaluation report or policy analysis article of your choice (but subject to Instructor's approval).

For each presentation you should prepare a PowerPoint file and a 1-2 page handout for the rest of the class. Expected length of presentation: 10-15 min. plus discussion. Presentations schedules will be discussed with the Instructor.

**Participation:**

For an active class discussion attendance is a must, but passive attendance will not be assessed positively. In order to be able to participate in class discussion, it is important that you do the readings in advance of each class. For this course to work, students must participate in class discussion. In a class of this size it is impossible for all students to participate all the time. Students should, however, strive to attend class, demonstrate that they have read the assigned readings, thought about the material and the discussion at hand, and add value to the classroom discussion. Students will be provided with a participation rubric and be given a mid-term participation grade with detailed feedback.

**Final test:**

This will be a take-home test. Details provided closer to the date.

**Required Text:**

Newcomer, K. E., Hatry, H. P. and Wholey, J. S.(editors) (2015): *Handbook of Practical Program Evaluation* (4<sup>th</sup> edition), Jossey-Bass. (ISBN: 978-1-118-89360-9)

Note:

Additional required readings are journal publications that can be accessed free of charge through York Libraries eResources (note: search by journal title). Such additional readings will be based on specific student interests and will be announced in due time as the course proceeds. Please check the course website regularly for updates and class agenda.

**Suggested Readings in Program Evaluation (in reverse chronological order):**

Pirog, M. A. (editor) *Social Experimentation, Program Evaluation, and Public Policy*, Journal of Policy Analysis & Management Classics Series, Wiley Periodicals, Inc., 2008. (ISBN: 9781405193931) Note: The articles published in this book can be also accessed free of charge through York Libraries eResources and the *Journal of Policy Analysis & Management*.

Spaulding, D. T. *Program Evaluation in Practice: Core Concepts and Examples for Discussion and Analysis*, Jossey-Bass (A Wiley Imprint), 2008. (ISBN: 978-0-7879-8685-8)

Owen, J. M. *Program Evaluation: Forms and Approaches* (3<sup>rd</sup> edition), The Guilford Press, 2007. (ISBN: 13 978-1-59385-406-5 or 10 1-59385-406-4)

Posavac, E. I. and R. G. Carey. *Program Evaluation: Methods and Case Studies* (6<sup>th</sup> edition), Upper Saddle River, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 2003.

Armit, A. and J. Bourgault (editors.) *Hard Choices or No Choices: Assessing Program Review*, Institute for Public Administration in Canada, Toronto, 1995.

Rossi, P. H. and H. E. Freeman. *Evaluation: A Systematic Approach* (5<sup>th</sup> edition) Newbury Park, California: Sage Publications, 1993.

Hudson, J. and J. Roberts (editors). *Evaluating Justice: Canadian Policies and Programs*, Thompson Educational Publishing, Toronto, 1993.

**Online Sources in Program Evaluation:**

Various on-line journals available through York Libraries eResources, for example:

- Canadian Journal of Program Evaluation
- Journal of Policy Analysis and Management
- Evaluation and Program Planning
- Journal of Comparative Policy Analysis

For interesting program evaluations in developing country contexts see:

The Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab, Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Free program evaluations available at <http://www.povertyactionlab.org/papers/>

<b>Week/Date</b>	<b>Subject/Reading/Important Dates</b>
Week 1 September 14	Introduction to the course and expectations  <i>Planning and designing useful evaluations</i> Wholey, Chapter 1
Week 2 September 21	<i>Analyzing and engaging stakeholders</i> Wholey, Chapter 2
Week 3 September 28	<i>Using Logic Models</i> Wholey, Chapter 3  <i>Exploratory Evaluation</i> Wholey, Chapter 4
Week 4 October 5	<i>Performance Measurement</i> Wholey, Chapter 5  <i>Comparison Group Design</i> Wholey, Chapter 6
October 12	<b>Fall Reading Week – no class</b>
Week 5 October 19	<i>Randomized controlled trials and nonrandomized designs</i> Wholey, Chapter 7  <i>Discussion of Research Ethics</i> Required Reading: York University Ethics Review Process for Research Involving Human Participants Policy available at <a href="http://www.yorku.ca/secretariat/policies/document.php?document=94">http://www.yorku.ca/secretariat/policies/document.php?document=94</a>  Recommended readings: Blustein, J. (2005) "Toward a more public discussion of the ethics of federal social program evaluation," <i>Journal of Policy Analysis and Management</i> Vol. 24, Issue 4, pp. 824-846.
Week 6 October 26	<i>Qualitative Data Analysis</i> Wholey, Chapter 22 <b>Critical Literature Review Due today</b>
Week 7 November 2	<i>Using statistics in Evaluation</i> Wholey, Chapter 23
Week 8 November 9	<i>Cost-Effectiveness and Cost-Benefit Analysis</i> Wholey, Chapter 24
Week 9 November 16	<i>Using Surveys and focus group interviews</i> Wholey, Chapter 14 and 20
Week 10 November 23	<i>Pitfalls in Evaluations</i> Wholey, Chapter 26
Week 11 November 30	<b>Test</b>
Week 12 December 7	Guest Speaker <b>EA Due</b>