

WWS 515: Program Evaluation
Spring 2008
(507 is a prerequisite)

Time: 10:40-12:10 T and Th
Place: Room 015 Wallace Hall

Instructor:

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Preceptor

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Office Hours:

By appointment, not Mondays

Assistant:

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Daily 9-5

TEXTS

1. ***Recommended Text.*** Social Experiments: Evaluating Public Programs with Experimental Methods. 1999. Larry Orr. Sage Publication. An excellent book on social experiments evaluations.
2. Handbook of Practical Program Evaluation. 2nd Edition, 2004. Edited by Wholey, Hatry, and Newcomer. ISBN 0-7879-6713-0 [Jossey-Bass]. An excellent reference book with well-written chapters addressing many evaluation areas—such as developing survey, running focus groups, etc.
3. Evaluation, 7th 2004 Ed. By Rossi, Lipsey, and Freeman, Sage, 2004. A great overview
4. Experimental and Quasi-Experimental Designs by Shadish, Cook and Campbell (2002) is an excellent reference for those that want a more technique, statistically oriented book.

Class Schedule:

I do not hold class on the Jewish holidays, which unfortunately fall this year on a Tuesday and Thursday. Thus, there will be NO CLASS on September 30th or October 9th. Instead, we will meet on FRIDAY SEPTEMBER 26 from 1-2:30 (there are no other courses scheduled then) and FRIDAY OCTOBER 1ST 1-2:30.

Class Etiquette:

1. Computer may be used in the classroom ONLY for taking notes. If you wish to use your computer in class, you must provide me with a signed written pledge that you will use the computer during the class period only for taking notes.
2. Unless you absolutely have to or you have gotten prior permission, you will not leave the class once it begins.
3. I will not distribute my class notes. I have found that having to take notes increases your focus on the material.

E-Reserves

User ID: wws515

Password: pro

September 11 Tailoring Evaluations—The Art of Evaluation (1 lecture)

Reading (Both are on Blackboard in Course Materials)

1. Logic Models in Out-of-School Time Programs: Why are They Important?
2. W.K. Kellogg Foundation Logic Model Development Guide December 2001,
<http://www.wkkf.org/Pubs/Tools/Evaluation/Pub3669.pdf>

Chapter 4: Using Logic Models to Plan Evaluations.

Optional Reading:

Wholey et al Chap 1 pp. 7-32 (e-reserve)

Homework:

(Due next class) fill out background sheet found in Assignments on Blackboard

September 16 Monitoring and Being an Outcomes-Driven Organization (1 lecture)

Readings

Good Stories Aren't Enough www.ppv.org/ppv/publications/203_publication.pdf
pp. 1-25 (the rest of the document discusses more details about how to incorporate a monitoring system into an organization. You are welcomed to read it, of course, but it is not required.) (pdf on blackboard)

Optional Reading:

Do Government Bureaucrats Make Effective Use of Performance Management Information? By Carolyn J. Heinrich <http://www.jstor.org/stable/pdfplus/1181649.pdf>

Homework:

(Due the next class) Logic Models on Black Board in Assignments

September 18 Implementation Evaluation (1 lecture)

Readings:

Process evaluations: A guide for out-of-school time practitioners (pdf on blackboard)

Evaluations to be discussed:

Growing Bigger Better: Lessons from Experience Corps' Expansion in Five Cities
Making a Difference in Schools

Optional reading: (e-reserve)

1994 Wholey, Hatry and Newcomer: Ch 3 Designing and Using Process Evaluation

September 23 Introduction to Assessing Impacts (1 lecture)

Readings

Orr, Chapter 1 pp. 1-22 and pp168-185

September 25 and October 2 Random Assignment Experiments (1 ½ lectures)

(September 30, October 7 and 9th classes will be rescheduled to November)

Readings

Orr Chapter 2, pp. 35--64

Orr Chapter 3, pp. 69-100

Newman, Rawlings and Gertler pp.191-193 (on e-reserve) for the case

Optional

Here are some examples of random assignment evaluations. Skim one or more to see how the experiments were done and how the results are presented.

1. Impacts of Title V Abstinence Education Programs
<http://www3.interscience.wiley.com/cgi-bin/fulltext/117934920/PDFSTART>
2. Does Job Corps Work? Summary
<http://www.mathematica-mpr.com/publications/SearchList.aspx?jumpsrch=yes&txtSearch=Job%20Corps>
3. School Choice in New York City---
<http://www.mathematicampr.com/publications/SearchList.aspx?jumpsrch=yes&txtSearch=school choice in New York City>
4. An Experimental Investigation of the Indian caste system—on Blackboard, Course materials, Extra Random Assignment Material
5. Some examples of experiments in LDCs—also on Blackboard, Course materials, Extra Random Assignment Material

There is also a simple primer on RA on Blackboard

Homework:

(Have for the second class on RA) Read this case—just a couple of pages—carefully and answer the case questions in the Assignment section as best as you can.

October 14 Experimental Design Case (1 ½ lectures)

Case: Cognitive Abilities of Malnourished Children in Columbia

Designing your own RA evaluation (1 lecture)

This session will start off going over material you don't have a firm grip in a Question-and-Answer Session. Then you will meet in your paper groups and start designing a random assignment evaluation of it (just assume the conditions are right for random assignment, even if they are not).

October 16, 18 and 23rd Topic 8 Introduction to Quasi-Experimental Design (2 lectures)

Readings—October 16 and 18

Shadish et al. pp136-156

Rossi et al pp.265-300 [this chapter discusses general problems for comparison groups]

October 23-For the third lecture: Bloom (ed) Chapter 5 pp. 173-225 reviews how well comparison group designs do relative to RA designs

Optional:

Valadez and Bamberger, Ch 8 Quasi-Experimental Designs pp. 227-288

(on e-reserve, provides dozens of international examples of quasi-experimental designs)

Shadish, Cook and Campbell, pp. 484-504 (optional—more advanced statistically)

PSM reading: (optional)

Are Experiments the Only Option? Agodini and Dynarski, Mathematica Policy Research, August 2001. <http://www.mathematica-mpr.com/publications/PDFs/experonly.pdf>

They have a very nice table on p 26 showing the process of PSM. Skim to get an idea of how PSM is done in the field.

Example of QE designs (optional):

Skim to see how the evaluations were done and how the results are presented:

Evaluation of Clinical Pharmacy Demonstration Projects (in course documents—example of matched comparison groups)

BREAK

November 4 (1 lecture) Finish up **Impact Regressions**
And do **Comparison Group In class cases**

Reading

Stock and Watson, Chapter 11, pp. 373-399

November 6 and 7 Sample Size Issues (2 lectures)

Reading

Orr, Chapter 4, pp. 103-115, pp. 121—134

Homework Due Nov 11th: Estimating MDDs

November 10 Precept

November 11 Full Coverage Program Impact Evaluations

Readings

Wholey et. al, Ch 5 pp. 126-149. [this article discusses various QE techniques]

November 13 and November 18 Choosing a Right Evaluation Design

Reading

a. Wholey Ch 19—Pitfalls in Evaluation pp. 547-570

b. Shoestring Evaluation: Designing Impact Evaluations under Budget, Time and Data Constraints

<http://www.enterprise-impact.org.uk/informationresources/toolbox/shoestringevaluation.shtml>

November 20 Speaker

November 25, December 2 and 4th Cost Effectiveness and Benefit Cost Analysis

Reading

a. Greenberg and Appenzeller, Chapter 4 (on measuring program costs) on e-reserve

b. Wholey et al. (2004), Ch 18 Cost-Effectiveness and Cost-Benefit Analysis

c. Orr, Chapter 6, pp. 220-229

Example

McConnell and Glazerman, "National Job Corps Study: The Benefits and Costs of Job Corps." (Executive Summary)

Homework (due December 8th): Cost Exercise

December 9th Speaker

Last Class -- Review Session: come with questions

There will be a scheduled 3-hour final exam during exam period. The time will be announced later.

HOMEWORKS

The major homework of the class is *Designing an Impact Study* (due on November 20th) You will have learned about all of the most commonly used designs by the middle of October. However, start thinking about what program do you want to evaluate and what group do you want to work with, now.

Due Dates

September 16 Email background sheet to me jgrossma@princeton.edu

September 18 Logic Models

September 26 Cali Case Questions

October 7

a. Come to class with questions you still have about RA and Comparison group design

b. Decide the team you are going to work with on the major Design assignment You will meet with your team during class time to choose a program, and start selecting outcome questions/measures

November 6 MDD (this should not take longer than 10 minutes)

November 20 Impact Evaluation Design: Design an Impact study on a program of your choosing. You should work in small groups (of 3-4 people).

****Groups must come see me to talk about their design at least once for about an hour.

E-mail me the final paper at jgrossma@princeton.edu and Carlos, cvalasco@princeton.edu

December 8 Cost-Effectiveness Homework. E-mail me jgrossma@princeton.edu and Carlos, cvalasco@princeton.edu