
University of Guelph
DEPARTMENT OF FAMILY RELATIONS AND APPLIED NUTRITION

FRAN*6210 Program Evaluation

COURSE OUTLINE – WINTER 2018

Instructor:	Kendra Siekmans, PhD	Office:	MACS 324 (Tel. ext 52347)
E-mail:	ksiekman@uoguelph.ca	Office hours:	By appointment

Class time: Thursday, 8:30 – 11:20 a.m., MACS 331

CALENDAR DESCRIPTION

An examination of the theoretical principles and practical applications of evaluation issues and strategies. Special attention is given to services for children and families across the life span.

OVERVIEW

This graduate course is designed to provide students with a foundation in the theory and practice of program evaluation. The focus of the course is on the evaluation of programs for a variety of populations for the purpose of designing, improving, and assessing programs and their effectiveness.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

At the completion of this course, successful students will be able to:

- 1) Describe various types of program evaluation, what questions they are designed to answer and how they are conducted;
- 2) Critique written reports of program evaluations;
- 3) Design a program evaluation plan, including:
 - a. a description of the program and rationale for the evaluation;
 - b. a program logic model that describes the objectives, logic and activities of a program; and
 - c. a description of the evaluation methods, including a plan to communicate program evaluation findings and encourage stakeholders to take action based on them.

COURSE FORMAT

Classes will consist of a combination of a lecture or presentation by me or a guest speaker, individual student presentations, individual or group work during class, and group discussions. Wherever possible, I will seek to facilitate students engaging with the subject matter in a practical and hands-on manner.

All of us share the responsibility to create an environment that facilitates learning through class discussion. For applied courses like this one, “you get out what you put in”. I have done my best to

design a course that will provide you with ample opportunity to learn and I will work hard during the semester to make it interesting, challenging, and meaningful. Nevertheless, you are in control of your success in this course and, in order to be successful, you will need to be actively involved. Your attendance in class is critical and you will need to come to class prepared including doing your readings and any other preparatory work ahead of time.

I reserve the right to revise the course format and schedule as needed, provided that you are given adequate notice. In particular, the course format may be revised slightly based on actual student enrollment numbers.

REQUIRED TEXTBOOK

Mertens, D.M., & Wilson, A.T. (2012). *Program evaluation theory and practice: a comprehensive guide*. New York, NY: The Guilford Press.

OTHER RECOMMENDED TEXTBOOKS

Bamberger, M., Rugh, J. & Mabry, L. (2012). *RealWorld Evaluation: working under budget, time, data, and political constraints*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.

Rossi, P.H., Lipsey, M.W. & Freeman, H.E. (2004). *Evaluation: a systematic approach*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.

Wyatt Knowlton, L., & Phillips, C. C. (2013). *The Logic Model Guidebook: Better Strategies for Great Results*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.




ADDITIONAL READINGS

Additional readings will be assigned throughout the semester and made available at least one week prior to the relevant class on the CourseLink site in the Content section.

COURSE EVALUATION

Assignment	% of total mark	Due date
Oral critique of program evaluation journal article	15%	TBD
Program evaluation project part 1: Overview – oral presentation and written assignment	20%	oral: 1 February written: 5 February
Program evaluation project part 2: Program logic model – oral presentation and written assignment	20%	oral: 1 March written: 5 March
Program evaluation project part 3: Outcome evaluation plan – oral presentation and written assignment	35%	oral: 5 April written: 10 April
Participation in class - based on class attendance, self-assessment and professor's assessment of preparation and participation in class discussions	10%	N/A

COURSE SCHEDULE

Date	Topic	Readings
Jan 11	Intro to the course and to each other <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction to the course • Course learning objectives • Introduction to each other • Assignment of article topics & discuss potential programs for project 	M&W Chpt 1 The Canadian Evaluation Society Competencies for Canadian Evaluation Practice https://evaluationcanada.ca/competencies-canadian-evaluators
Jan 18	Program Evaluation Paradigms and Theories Engaging with Stakeholders <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The importance of stakeholder engagement • Ethics in program evaluation • What evaluation questions are being asked? 	M&W Chpt 2 & 7 (p.223-232)
Jan 25	Describing the Program <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The project/program cycle • Program theory and logic models and their role in program evaluation Evaluability Assessment – how the characteristics of a program influence its evaluability	WK&P Chpt 1 (on Ares course e-reserve)
Feb 1	 Evaluation Project - Program overview presentations Program evaluation designs	M&W Chpt 9
Feb 8	Gathering credible evidence - Quantitative, qualitative, mixed methods	M&W Chpt 10 & 11
Feb 15	Formative evaluation 👤 Student formative evaluation article critique 👤 Student needs assessment evaluation article critique	Student-selected articles
Feb 22	<i>Winter Break</i>	
Mar 1	 Evaluation Project - Program logic model presentations Process evaluation 👤 Student process evaluation article critique	Student-selected article
Mar 8	Joint university & community program evaluation seminar @ 10C (organized by Andrew Taylor) Note: Friday, March 9 – last day to drop one semester course	None
Mar 15	Outcome/impact evaluation 👤 Student outcome/impact evaluation article critique	Student-selected article
Mar 22	Analyzing and interpreting the data Communicating and utilizing the findings	M&W Chpt 12 & 13
Mar 29	Current trends & innovation in program evaluation	TBD
Apr 5	 Student Outcome Evaluation Plan Presentations (last class, final version of evaluation plans due on Tuesday, April 10)	None

COURSE WEBSITE

There is a course website at <http://courselink.uoguelph.ca>. All components of this course will be housed on the CourseLink site including this course outline, links to further resources, and discussion forums. Your assignments will be submitted through the dropbox function. Marks and feedback will also be released on the site. Please familiarize yourself with this website as soon as possible and visit it regularly throughout the semester.

E-MAIL COMMUNICATION

As per university regulations, all students are required to check their <mail.uoguelph.ca> e-mail account regularly: e-mail is the official route of communication between the University and its students.

WHEN YOU CANNOT MEET A COURSE REQUIREMENT

When you find yourself unable to meet an in-course requirement because of illness or compassionate reasons, please advise me in writing, with your name, id#, and e-mail contact. See the Graduate Calendar for regulations and procedures for Academic Consideration:

<https://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/graduate/2017-2018/genreg/index.shtml>

Late assignments: Late assignments will be accepted up to five days following the due date and will receive a penalty of 10% per day EXCEPT under documented grounds for compassionate consideration. Assignments submitted more than five days late without documented grounds will receive a grade of zero.

Copies of out-of-class assignments

Keep paper and/or other reliable back-up copies of all out-of-class assignments: you may be asked to resubmit work at any time.

TURN-IT-IN SOFTWARE

Course instructors are allowed to use software to help in detecting plagiarism or unauthorized copying of student assignments. Plagiarism is one of the most common types of academic misconduct on our campus. Plagiarism involves students using the work, ideas and/or the exact wording of other people or sources without giving proper credit to others for the work, ideas and/or words in their papers. Students can unintentionally commit misconduct because they do not know how to reference outside sources properly or because they don't check their work carefully enough before handing it in.

In this course, your instructor will be using Turnitin.com to detect possible plagiarism, unauthorized collaboration or copying as part of the ongoing efforts to prevent plagiarism in the College of Social and Applied Human Sciences.

A major benefit of using Turnitin is that students will be able to educate and empower themselves in preventing misconduct. In this course, you may screen your own assignments through Turnitin as many times as you wish before the due date. You will be able to see and print reports that show you exactly where you have properly and improperly referenced the outside sources and materials in your assignment.

DROP DATE

The last date to drop one-semester courses, without academic penalty, is Friday, March 9, 2018. Refer to the Graduate Calendar for the schedule of dates:

<https://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/graduate/current/sched/sched-dates-w11.shtml>

ACCESSIBILITY

The University of Guelph is committed to creating a barrier-free environment. Providing services for students is a shared responsibility among students, faculty and administrators. This relationship is based on respect of individual rights, the dignity of the individual and the University community's shared commitment to an open and supportive learning environment. Students requiring service or accommodation, whether due to an identified, ongoing disability or a short-term disability should contact the Centre for Students with Disabilities as soon as possible.

For more information, contact SAS (formerly CSD) at 519-824-4120 ext. 56208 or email sas@uoguelph.ca or see the website: <https://wellness.uoguelph.ca/accessibility/>

ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT

The University of Guelph is committed to upholding the highest standards of academic integrity and it is the responsibility of all members of the University community – faculty, staff, and students – to be aware of what constitutes academic misconduct and to do as much as possible to prevent academic offences from occurring. University of Guelph students have the responsibility of abiding by the University's policy on academic misconduct regardless of their location of study; faculty, staff and students have the responsibility of supporting an environment that discourages misconduct. Students need to remain aware that instructors have access to and the right to use electronic and other means of detection.

Please note: Whether or not a student intended to commit academic misconduct is not relevant for a finding of guilt. Hurried or careless submission of assignments does not excuse students from responsibility for verifying the academic integrity of their work before submitting it. Students who are in any doubt as to whether an action on their part could be construed as an academic offence should consult with a faculty member or faculty advisor.

The Academic Misconduct Policy is detailed in the Graduate Calendar:

<https://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/graduate/2017-2018/genreg/index.shtml>

RECORDING OF MATERIALS

Presentations which are made in relation to course work—including lectures—cannot be recorded or copied without the permission of the presenter, whether the instructor, a classmate or guest lecturer. Material recorded with permission is restricted to use for that course unless further permission is granted.

RESOURCES

The Graduate Calendar is the source of information about the University of Guelph's procedures, policies and regulations which apply to graduate programs:

<https://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/graduate/2017-2018/index.shtml>

DESCRIPTION OF COURSE ASSIGNMENTS

Oral critique of program evaluation journal article

You will facilitate class discussion based on your own selection of a peer-reviewed program evaluation article on an assigned topic. Please email the paper to me (at least) 1 week before your presentation date so I can post it to CourseLink.

The purpose of this presentation is to present information to the class about the program and program evaluation described in your paper and to facilitate a discussion which critically evaluates and considers major program evaluation issues.

Each presentation should include the following:

1. Summary of the Program Evaluation (maximum of 10 minutes)

- a) Program description/background
- b) The need(s) addressed by the program
- c) The type of program evaluation and its objectives
- d) The program evaluation data sources
- e) Design of the evaluation
- f) Major results/findings (or lack thereof)
- g) Conclusions & whether the aims of the program evaluation were met

2. Facilitated Class Discussion (approx. 10 min.)

Identify key issues from your article and facilitate a discussion about some of these. How you choose to facilitate the class discussion is up to you. Examples of issues to address during discussion include but are NOT limited to: limitations/issues regarding the quality of the evaluation (e.g., re: design/methodology, analyses, data sources, measurement, validity); issues with conclusions drawn or the questions being addressed; issues with the program theory; practical issues; issues with process or outcomes; how findings can be used and difficulties therein; what you would do differently, etc.

Grade Assessment

Summary = 5 pts

Discussion Facilitation = 5 pts

Presentation skills/organization = 5 pts

TOTAL = 15 pts

OVERVIEW OF PROGRAM EVALUATION PROJECT

*Adapted from course projects designed by J. Newberry & S. Lewis (PSYC*6840) and L. Forbes & T. van Rhijn (FRAN*6210)*

Over the course of the term, you will be designing a program evaluation *plan* of an actual community program. The goal of this project is to give you an opportunity to apply the knowledge from your readings and class discussions/exercises to develop an evaluation plan that can be used by a community organization. In order to complete your project, I recommend that you arrange at least two meetings with someone involved in the community organization or program – the first to develop the program overview and the second to share your proposed outcome evaluation plan with them for feedback. You will want to organize your first meeting as soon as possible, as this process always takes longer than anticipated.

Overview of Project Components & Due Dates

Part 1 – Program Overview	20%	Class presentation on Feb 1 Written component due Feb 5
Part 2 - Program Logic Model	20%	Class presentation on Mar 1 Written component due Mar 5
Part 3 - Outcome Evaluation Plan	35%	Class presentation on Apr 5 Written component due Apr 10

All parts of the project should be submitted to CourseLink by 11:59pm by the due date.

PART 1: PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Write a brief overview of your partner organization and the specific program for which you are designing a program evaluation plan. The overview should describe the items outlined below.

Part 1 should be no more than 6 pages (single-spaced, font size 11, not including cover page and references). Please include the following:

- 1. Program/organization Description** (~ 1 page): Describe the program's setting and general structure; including information about the organization itself (e.g., history, mission, location, etc.)
- 2. Program Purpose** (~ 1 page): Articulate the goals/aims of the specific program. Beyond the program-specific goals, include an overview of program content/curriculum, any theoretical/empirical/practical basis for the program, and a brief explanation of how the program works (i.e., what is the program theory?).
- 3. Stakeholders** (~half page): Describe the program stakeholders. This includes those who are involved in the delivery of the program, who can make use of any evaluation results, AND who is directly served by the program (i.e., who benefits from it). If applicable, consider the program donor/funder as well.
- 4. Rationale for the Evaluation** (~ half page): Articulate the rationale for the evaluation – state the problem or gap in knowledge that the evaluation will be designed to address; what is the importance of the evaluation topic to key stakeholders, clients and audiences (i.e. potential contribution).
- 5. Proposed Evaluation Questions/Ideas** (~1-2 pages): Based on the program purpose, please indicate what questions you want to evaluate. These questions should also reflect the needs and interests of your community partner.
- 6. Ethical Considerations** (~half page): Outline the ethical issues that pertain to conducting an evaluation

of your program. Reflecting on these issues will increase awareness about the types of issues (e.g., confidentiality) that can arise when engaging in an actual evaluation and merit consideration when developing an evaluation plan.

Prepare and deliver a 10-minute oral presentation to the class on February 1st that highlights the key points from your program overview. We will give approximately 5 minutes for questions, feedback and discussion after each presentation.

Incorporate any revisions based on input and feedback received during your class presentation. Submit your written assignment to the appropriate CourseLink dropbox folder by 11:59 p.m. on February 5th.

Assessment of Part 1

Oral presentation to the class = 5 pts

Program description = 2 pts

Program purpose & theory = 2 pts

Stakeholders = 2 pts

Evaluation questions = 3 pts

Ethical considerations = 2 pts

Grammar/Style = 3 pts

TOTAL = 20 pts

PART 2: PROGRAM LOGIC MODEL

Building on Part 1, Part 2 involves a detailed program logic model. Create a logic model for your program. When submitting your program logic model, submit both a diagram (generated in PowerPoint or some other program) and a text description. The text description should include a brief description of each component or 'box' on the logic model (e.g., inputs, activities, ST and LT outcomes, etc.). Use a labelling system to match the diagram and text description. The text description should also include the validity assumptions (i.e., the causal assumptions for each 'arrow' in the model).

Prepare and deliver a 5-minute oral presentation to the class on March 1st that describes your program logic model. We will give approximately 5 minutes for questions, feedback and discussion after each presentation.

Incorporate any revisions based on input and feedback received during your class presentation. Submit your written assignment to the appropriate CourseLink dropbox folder by 11:59 p.m. on March 5th.

Assessment of Part 2

Oral presentation to the class = 5 pts

Program Logic Model Diagram = 6 pts

Program Logic Model Description = 6 pts

Grammar/Style = 3 pts

TOTAL = 20 pts

PART 3: OUTCOME EVALUATION PLAN

For Part 3, you will develop and describe a plan for conducting an outcome evaluation, with consideration of key process-related issues. The evaluation plan includes delineating the outcome objectives, design, measures, data collection, analysis and results dissemination that will be used in the outcome evaluation of your program. Your outcome evaluation plan should articulate how you will determine that desired change(s) are attributable to the program (and its components) and/or how you will interpret/account for a lack of change (no desired changes) or unanticipated changes.

Please include the following when submitting Part 3 (max 10 pages, not including cover page and references/appendices):

1. An updated program logic model

You will likely make some adjustments to your program logic model based on feedback and an evolving understanding of the program and the evaluation, so please submit an updated version with Part 3.

Note: The program logic model will not be regraded for Part 3.

2. Description of prioritized outcomes:

Describe your prioritized outcomes, including the specific *outcome chains* in your evaluation plan. To keep the assignment manageable, and depending on the size and complexity of your program, you will likely need to prioritize certain outcomes. Outcome chains refer to sets of activities, relevant outputs, and the corresponding outcomes (short/intermediate/long-term) that stem from these.

3. Outcome Evaluation Table (Matrix), with columns for:

- a) *Outcome Objective* (i.e., the short/intermediate/long term outcomes that will be the focus of your evaluation plan).
- b) *Outcome Evaluation Question(s)* (i.e., the primary outcome questions for each objective/outcome).
- c) *Indicators* (i.e., the data required to answer your outcome evaluation questions).
- d) *Measures and Tools* (i.e., the measures used to collect indicator data).
- e) *Data Sources* (i.e., where will you get the information, when, and who will collect it?). These will be brief statements about your program evaluation design, which will be elaborated on in other sections.

4. Outcome Evaluation Design, which includes:

- a) A description of your measures and tools of assessment (qualitative or quantitative). Describe the measure or tool and how it purports to measure or assess the indicators corresponding to your prioritized outcomes. Please include relevant information, such as:
 - I. Is it an existing measure/tool or one customized/developed for your evaluation?
 - II. Outline how you would go about developing a new measure/tool if one does not exist for your indicator **you do not need to actually develop a new tool for this project
 - III. If appropriate, how will the measure be scored? Psychometrics? (reliability/validity)?Whenever possible, please provide the measures as an appendix

- b) A description of the details of your design as they apply to each measure (e.g., who administers and completes the measure/tool, is there a control/comparison group, the timing of administration in relation to the program, plans for ensuring the quality/accuracy of the measure/tool and data)
- d) A brief description of data management procedures (e.g, storage)
- e) An overall evaluation timeline (as a figure or table)

5. Analysis and Interpretation

Explain how you will answer your outcome evaluation questions. This section should include a description of the analyses that will be conducted, demonstrating clear connections between the program evaluation objectives/key questions, data and intended analysis that will be conducted. Also consider any major threats to validity and how your program evaluation design and/or plan for analysis addresses them.

6. Results Dissemination

Describe how you plan to share with stakeholders the results and lessons learned from the evaluation. What strategies will you employ in order to encourage the use of the evaluation findings? Consider the different types of stakeholders.

Prepare and deliver a **15-minute oral presentation to the class on April 5th** that provides an overview of your program evaluation plan. We will give time for questions, feedback and discussion after each presentation. Following this discussion, you are encouraged to reflect on your written plan (part 3) and make any changes prior to submission of the final written version on April 10th at 11:59 p.m.

Assessment of Part 3

Oral presentation to the class = 5 pts
Description of prioritized outcomes = 5 pts
Outcome Evaluation Table = 5 pts
Outcome Evaluation Design Written Description = 7 pts
Analysis and Interpretation = 5 pts
Strategy for Sharing Results = 5 pts
Grammar/Style = 3 pts
TOTAL = 35 pts