

WWS 515: Program Evaluation
Fall 2009
(507 is a prerequisite)

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

Instructor:

Dr. Jean Baldwin Grossman
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Office Hours:

By appointment, not Mondays

Preceptor

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Assistant:

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Daily 10-4

Goals and structure of the course: The goal of the course is to give students an introduction to the issues around evaluating programs or initiatives. In the course, we will cover how to study the implementation of a program, how to monitor a program's functioning, how to estimate its impacts using numerous techniques and how to conduct a cost-effectiveness or cost-benefit study. The course has one major paper that is completed by students working in small groups. There are also several small homework assignments. E-mail Carlos and me both homeworks and final paper at jgrossma@princeton.edu and Carlos, cvelasco@princeton.edu

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 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. Ask me to slow down if I am going too fast.

E-Reserves

User ID: wws515b

Password: pro

The major homework of the class is *Designing an Impact Study* (due on April 16th)
You will have learned about the most commonly used designs by the middle of March.
However, start thinking about what program you want to evaluate and what group do you want to work with, **now**.

Impact Evaluation Design Paper: Design an impact and a companion implementation study on a program of your choosing. You should work in small groups (of 2-4 people).
****Groups must come see me to talk about their design at least once for about an hour.
E-mail Carlos and me the final paper at jgrossma@princeton.edu and Carlos, cvalasco@princeton.edu

February 3—Rescheduled to Friday Feb 6th 3:30-5 pm

February 5 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

February 6 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

February 10 Implementation Evaluation (1 lecture)

Readings:

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

Optional reading: (e-reserve)

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

February 12 Introduction to Assessing Impacts (1 lecture)

Readings

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

February 17 and February 19 Random Assignment Experiments (2 lectures)

Readings

Basics of Experiments: Orr Chapter 2, pp. 35--64

Orr Chapter 3, pp. 69-100

Analysis of Experiments: Stock and Watson, Chapter 11, pp. 373-399

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](http://www.mathematicampr.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 for the case. Read the case—just a couple of pages—carefully and answer the case questions in the Assignment section as best as you can.

February 24 and 26 Experimental Design Case (1 ½ lectures)

Case: Cognitive Abilities of Malnourished Children in Columbia

Newman, Rawlings and Gertler pp.191-193 (on e-reserve). The case is just 3 pages of text. Read them carefully. This is like an executive summary. You are not given all the details so you will have to figure out what they more likely did.

March 3 and 5 Sample Size Issues (2 lectures)

Reading

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

Homework Due March 10: Estimating MDDs

March ?? Precept

March 10 and 12 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]

Optional Reading:

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)

BREAK MARCH 16-20

March 24 How Good are Quasi-Experimental Estimates?

Bloom (ed) Chapter 5 pp. 173-225 (e-reserves)

Reviews how well comparison group designs do relative to RA designs. You don't need to know the statistically details but read it for substance

March 26 Quasi-Experimental Case (on Blackboard)

Homework for April 2nd: prepare a 10-15 minute presentation of your impact design.

March 31 Speaker: Josh Freely -- The Impact of Sectoral Employment Strategies

April 2 Small-Group Paper Presentations

April 7 Full Coverage Program Impact Evaluations

Readings

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

April 9 and 14 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](http://www.enterprise-impact.org.uk/informationresources/toolbox/shoestringevaluation.shtml)

April 16, 21 and 23 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)

April 28 Review of Key Course Topics

Last Class -- Question/Answer Session: come with questions

There will be a scheduled 3-hour final exam on May 13th. The time will be announced later.