COURSE SYLLABUS
PROGRAM EVALUATION
PADM 5335
SPRING 2013
Thursday 7:00 – 9:30 pm
BH 111

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

An increasing common question asked of the public administrator over the past twenty years has been “Is it working?” While the question seems easy, many public administrators are ill equipped to provide an answer. Program evaluation has grown out the need for hard data on which to judge public programs. This course is designed to help the inservice and preservice professional public manager conceptualize the program evaluation effort as a meaningful and understandable set of tasks. Since there is no single way to approach program evaluation this course will examine various means of evaluating a program. In the process of developing evaluation skills, it is hoped that the student will become a better contributor and more enlightened consumer of evaluation and research reports.

This class relies on experiential learning. Therefore much of the grade relies on various projects and exercises we do both during and outside class time, which simulate reality and help develop the skills necessary for program evaluation. Students will be assigned a group project to evaluate a City of Corpus Christi Development Services Department function or activity that will require a classroom presentation midway into the evaluation on preliminary project fieldwork & work plan; a final in-class PowerPoint presentation to the Instructor and the Director of Development Services at the end of the project; and a written, professional program evaluation report of the group project that will serve as the course final.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

The course can help achieve three goals of professional development for M.P.A. students:

1. **To provide a learning opportunity in which a solid, theoretical base complements, compounds, and guides the application of techniques.** The steps in the program evaluation process, for example, are viewed in the context of an organization’s political, social and economic conditions.

2. **To offer experiential learning and skill development.** By actually performing program evaluation tasks, the participant practices those processes and observes the group dynamics he or she may later find in a work situation. Research suggests students who actually “experience” program evaluation retain what they have learned longer than they do through typical lecture.
3. **To test techniques by confronting program evaluation problems & barriers in a real world setting.** Performing a program evaluation of a real world activity can bring the theoretical and textbook concepts to life.

**REQUIRED TEXTS:**


**RECOMMENDED FREE ON-LINE ELECTRONIC SUPPORT:**


**IMPORTANT NOTES**

1. **Syllabus Disclaimer and Changes.** The instructor reserves the right to make changes in the syllabus. Such changes will be announced in class.

2. **Late Hand-in.** Acceptance of late hand-ins is at the discretion of the instructor. If accepted, a letter grade will be deducted on all late hand-ins.

3. **Quality of Hand-in.** All course assignments must be type-written. Handwritten copies will not be accepted. Please no binders; a staple in the top left-hand corner is very functional. Make and keep a copy for yourself of all class assignments you submit to me. Even with great care, sometimes things get lost.

**LEARNING ASSESSMENT/COURSE REQUIREMENTS:**

In general, your grade for each assignment will follow these guidelines:

**A (90-100%):** Meets all requirements of the assignment in a sound, clear, thorough, and professionally presented manner. Analytic tools are applied appropriately, performed correctly, and interpretations are accurate.

**B (80-89%):** Meets almost all of the requirements in a sound, clear, thorough, and professionally presented manner; or meets all of the requirements but lacks soundness, clarity, thoroughness, or professional presentation. Analytic tools are mostly applied appropriately, performed correctly, and interpretations are mostly accurate.

**C (70-79%):** Meets some of the requirements in a sound, clear, thorough, and professionally presented manner; or meets all of the requirements but lacks a combination of soundness, clarity, thoroughness, or professional presentation. Analytic tools are not applied appropriately, or not performed correctly, or interpretations are not accurate.
D or F (<70%): Less than the standard for “C”. Both of these grades are failing. All course requirements must be completed to receive a grade from this course.

Class Attendance 10%

Participation in 12 In-Class Preskill Activities 25%
(Up to 2 points for first 11 activities & 3 points for Reflections on Learning Activities)

10 sets of Posavac Study Questions (up to 3 points each) 30%

In-Class PowerPoint Presentation on Assigned Group Program Evaluation:
Preliminary Fieldwork & Evaluation Work Plan 10%

In Class Final PowerPoint Presentation on Completed Group Program Evaluation 10%

Written Final Report on Completed Group Program Evaluation 15%

TOTAL 100%

ATTENDANCE (10 points):

This course relies heavily on student attendance and interaction. Attendance and punctuality are expected in all classes. **Your absence from this class will be detrimental to your grade** may affect the course progression, and potentially, the grades of the other members of your class. Class work cannot be learned in absentia, and on-time attendance is expected. **With active classroom participation, the full 10% will be given for those with 0 or 1 absence; 5% for those with 2-3 absences; and zero for anyone with 4-5 absences. Six absences or more constitutes an “F” for the entire course.** Attendance is defined as initialing the roster before class begins and staying the entire period.

Each class will be devoted to discussion and analysis of the specific topics indicated for that class on the syllabus. It is important that each student come to each class well prepared to participate in discussions.

ACADEMIC HONESTY:

All responses and worked turned in to the instructor are to be your own personal work product. You are expected to understand and uphold the Academic Honor Code published in the Student Handbook. In addition to information listed in these sources, you are advised that:

1. If, **on a rare occasion**, you take material that is not yours, from any source whatsoever, and copy it into assignments for this class, you must provide a footnote, endnote, or parenthetical reference to the source of the material.

2. Any material which quotes verbatim from other sources must be enclosed in quotation marks and its source attributed as noted in rule #1 above.

3. Material not taken verbatim from a text but paraphrased must also be attributed as in rule #1.

4. Violations of these rules in any assignment may be subject to a minimum penalty of a grade of zero (0) for the assignment and may result in a grade of "F" for the course.
5. Violations of these rules can also result in administrative removal from the MPA program and the University depending on the instance.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES:

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact the Disability Services Office at (361) 825-5816 or visit the office in Driftwood 101.

ACADEMIC ADVISING:

The College of Liberal Arts requires that students meet with an Academic Advisor as soon as they are ready to declare a major. The Academic Advisor will set up a degree plan, which must be signed by the student, a faculty mentor, and the department chair. The College’s Academic Advising Center is located in Driftwood 203E, and can be reached at 825-3466.

GRADE APPEAL:

As stated in University Rule 13.02.99.C2, Student Grade Appeals, a student who believes that he or she has not been held to appropriate academic standards as outlined in the class syllabus, equitable evaluation procedures, or appropriate grading, may appeal the final grade given in the course. The burden of proof is upon the student to demonstrate the appropriateness of the appeal. A student with a complaint about a grade is encouraged to first discuss the matter with the instructor. For complete details, including the responsibilities of the parties involved in the process and the number of days allowed for completing the steps in the process, see University Rule13.02.99.C2, Student Grade Appeals, and University Procedure 13.02.99.C2.01, Student Grade Appeal Procedures. These documents are accessible through the University Rules Web site at http://www.tamucc.edu/provost/university_rules/index.html. For assistance and/or guidance in the grade appeal process, students may contact the Office of Student Affairs.
CLASS SCHEDULE: TOPICS AND ASSIGNED READINGS:

January 24  INTRODUCTION AND COURSE OVERVIEW
*In Class Preskill Exercise:* #3 Evaluating Chocolate Chip Cookies Using Evaluation Logic

January 31  THE POLITICS AND ETHICS OF EVALUATION PRACTICE
*Readings:* Posavac Chapter 5 & Preskill Section 2
*In Class Preskill Exercise:* #8 Ethical Dilemmas in Evaluation
*Homework:* Posavac Chapter 5 Study Questions #1, 3 & 5

February 7  OVERVIEW OF PERFORMANCE EVALUATION
MULTI-CULTURAL & CROSS CULTURAL ASPECTS OF EVALUATION
*Readings:* Preskill Section 3 & Posavac Chapter 1
*In Class Preskill Exercise:* To be assigned
*Homework:* Posavac Chapter 1 Study Questions #1, 2 & 4

February 14  PLANNING & FOCUSING THE EVALUATION USING THE LOGIC MODEL
*Readings:* Preskill Section 4 & Posavac Chapters 2 & 3
*In Class Preskill Exercise:* To be assigned
*Homework:* Posavac Chapter 2 Study Questions #1 & 2; Posavac Chapter 3 Study Questions #3 & 4

February 21  EVALUATION MODELS, APPROACHES & DESIGNS
NEEDS ASSESSMENT
*Readings:* Preskill Section 5 & Posavac Chapters 6 & 7
*In Class Preskill Exercise:* To be assigned
*Homework:* Posavac Chapter 6 Study Questions #4 & 5; Posavac Chapter 7 Study Questions #1, 2 & 3

February 28  ISSUES OF VALIDITY & SAMPLING
DEVELOPING OUTCOME MEASURES
*Readings:* Preskill Section 6 & Posavac Chapter 4
*In Class Preskill Exercise:* To be assigned
*Homework:* Posavac Chapter 4 Study Questions #4 & 5

March 7  COLLECTING EVALUATION DATA
QUALITATIVE EVALUATION METHODS
*Readings:* Preskill Section 7 & Posavac Chapters 8 & 9
*In Class Preskill Exercise:* To be assigned
*Homework:* Posavac Chapter 8 Study Questions #1, 3 & 5; Posavac Chapter 9 Study Question #2

March 14  SPRING BREAK
March 21  GROUP ASSIGNED PROGRAM EVALUATION:  IN CLASS POWERPOING PRESENTATION ON PRELIMINARY FIELDWORK & EVALUATION WORKPLAN  
**Homework:** Copy of PowerPoint Presentation

March 28  ANALYZING EVALUATION DATA  
**Cost/Benefit Analysis**  
**Readings:** Preskill Section 8 & Posavac Chapter 12  
**In Class Preskill Exercise:** To be assigned  
**Homework:** Posavac Chapter 12 Study Questions #1, 2 & 5

April 4  INTERPRETING, COMMUNICATING & REPORTING EVALUATION PROCESSES & FINDINGS  
**Readings:** Preskill Section 9 & Posavac Chapter 13, as well as Posavac Appendix Sample Report (beginning on page 284)  
**In Class Preskill Exercise:** To be assigned  
**Homework:** Posavac Chapter 13 Study Questions #1 & 2

April 11  MANAGING THE EVALUATION  
**Readings:** Preskill Section 10  
**In Class Preskill Exercise:** #64  
**Homework:** Turn in Preskill Activity #63, including answering debrief questions & turning in written budget worksheet

April 18  BUILDING & SUSTAINING SUPPORT FOR EVALUATION  
**How to Encourage Utilization**  
**Readings:** Preskill Section 11 & Posavac Chapter 14  
**In Class Preskill Exercise:** To be assigned  
**Homework:** Posavac Chapter 14 Study Questions #1, 2 & 3

April 25  REFLECTIONS ON LEARNING  
**In Class Preskill Exercises:** #69, #71 & #72

May 2  IN CLASS POWERPOINT PRESENTATION OF COMPLETED GROUP PROGRAM EVALUATION  
**Homework:** Copy of PowerPoint Presentation

May 9  **Finals Due:** Written Report on Completed Group Program Evaluation  
No Class