Program Evaluation Methods — R7036
Argosy University, San Francisco Bay Area
Summer 2005

Consistent with academic practice and principles, this syllabus may be modified by the instructor.

Instructor Contact Information	Instructor Name	John Carr, Ph.D.
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About the Instructor

I earned my doctorate in Measurement, Evaluation, and Research Methodology in the School of Education, University of California, Berkeley in 1982. I was Program Evaluator for 12 years in a large school district, and Director of Research and Evaluation for one year in another district, before joining WestEd in 1997. I am Senior Research Associate, Center for Educational Equity, at WestEd at the Oakland site. I am best known in California for my publication and workshop on teaching and assessing English learners. I authored a book on school program evaluation with Elaine Artman (*The Bottom-Up Simple Approach to School Accountability and Improvement*) and other publications. I have been an adjunct instructor of statistics at University of San Francisco for many years.

This will be my first teaching experience at Argosy, teaching this course, and teaching two weekend sessions, so adjustments in the syllabus will likely occur in ways that best benefit student learning and accurately reflect what has been learned.

Course Schedule

First day of Summer II term: June 30

Class session: Saturday & Sunday, 8 a.m. to 3 p.m., July 16 & 17, August 13 & 14

999A Canal Blvd., Point Richmond; room to be announced

Required Textbook

Evaluation A Systematic Approach, 7th ed., by Rossi, Lipsey, & Freeman, Sage.

Resources

American Evaluation Society (http://www.eval.org)
American Educational Research Association (http://aera.net)
The Bottom-Up Simple Approach to School Accountability and Improvement, by Carr & Artman, 2002.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course will provide a foundation understanding of the purpose, design, and implementation of program evaluations in educational settings such as schools or school districts. Proficient knowledge of the concepts and skills required to conduct a program evaluation study will enable students to interact with professional evaluators or conduct basic, small scale studies. (Knowledge of qualitative and quantitative methodology and computer database technology complements this course to become fully competent in conducting complex and large scale evaluation studies.)

COURSE OBJECTIVES

The student who completes assignments, tests, and contributes to class discussions at a proficient level of understanding will be able:

- To define educational program evaluation and explain its purpose
- To define the differences between quantitative and qualitative methods and data, and explain how the two methods can be complementary
- To explain the purpose, design, and characteristics/aspects of impact evaluation, using an example from the student's own work environment

ASSUMPTIONS

Students have completed prerequisite coursework as stipulated by Argosy University with a grade of Commendable (B) or higher.

COURSE GRADING CRITERIA

DISTINGUISHED (Grade of A). Performs above proficient, at an exceptional level with consistency and in all areas of assignments, tests, and class participation. All papers are turned in on time and the student is actively participates during all class sessions.

COMMENDABLE (Grade of B). Performs proficiently in all areas of assignments, tests, and class participation as per the standards established by Argosy University's School of Education. All assignments are turned in on time.

ACCEPTABLE (Grade of C). Performance is acceptable and meets the minimum requirements.

FAILING (Grade of F). Absences, late arrival and early departure from class, lack of active participation, student does not demonstrate adequate knowledge of the subject matter. Assignments are not turned in on time.

ADA STATEMENT

It is the policy of Argosy University/San Francisco Campus to make reasonable accommodations for qualified students with disabilities, in accordance with the Americans With Disability Act (ADA). If you are a student with a disability and need accommodations to complete your requirements, please make an appointment with the course instructor as soon as possible to discuss your request. Information disclosed after completing the final exam cannot be considered in terms of your evaluation. So, please make this an optimal experience by letting the instructor know of accommodations needed at the outset of the course. All information will be held in confidence.

ABSENTEE AND ATTENDANCE POLICY

All students are expected to attend participate actively in online activities and discussions. Because the course is concentrated over two weekends during a period of about one month, students who miss online class session, are late participating in discussions, or skip modules may not do as well as those who participate fully in all learning modules. If extenuating circumstances occur that may cause late, limited, or minimal participation on any module, the student should contact the instructor as soon as possible to make appropriate arrangements.

LATE SUBMISSIONS

Except for compelling circumstances (hospitalization, military deployment, or death in the nuclear family) late submissions will not be accepted.

INCOMPLETES

The grade of "I" is given for an incomplete if you are (a) unable to complete all of your course requirements and (b) you have been granted advanced approval from your instructor. Per university policy, a student must complete the course work by the end of the next required term. Grades of "I" will be changed to "F" if course work is not made up by the required date. If Dr. Carr is not employed by Argosy University in the semester that the student requests a review of completed course requirements, the student must ask the dean for instructions.

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY OR PLAGIARISM

It is expected that all students adhere to the university's policy on academic honesty and integrity. Students found to have plagiarized written material either in whole or in part, defined as intentionally or knowingly representing the words or ideas of another's as one's own, will be given no credit for the assignment, which will result in an F for the course (see missing or late assignments). A letter regarding the instance will also be filed with the university administration, which will become a part of the student's permanent record.

TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENT

All written work must be word-processed. No handwritten work will be accepted. Students should have access to the Internet.

EXTRA CREDIT/ RE-EXAMINATION

University policy prohibits the instructor from allowing students to improve grades via extra credit, makeup work, revisions, or re-examinations. Once assignments are submitted and graded, grades given are not subject to change. Students who do not complete the course requirements for reasonable cause may petition the university for a grade of incomplete (see University Handbook).

COMMUNICATION WITH INSTRUCTOR

I will reply to emails usually within 48 hours. If you would like to set up a phone appointment, please email me at **john-ja@comcast.net.** I am not a full-time instructor with Argosy and I have full-time employment with an educational organization, so I do not have an office or office hours. I will attempt to be responsive to students in terms of their clarifying questions. Students are expected to have read the textbook chapters before class session and come prepared with questions, comments, and ideas.

TO SEND WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS TO DR. CARR

Most assignments will be submitted in electronic version as an email attachment. All written assignments are to be in Microsoft Word or a wordprocessing program compatible with Word, or converted to Adobe pdf format.

Assignments and Point Values	Assignments	40 points
	Evaluation Project Report	40 points
	Attendance and participation	20 points
	TOTAL	**100 POINTS**

GRADING RUBRICS

DISCUSSION RUBRIC				
Criteria	**Distinguished (4)**	**Commendable (3)**	**Acceptable (2)**	**Failed (1)**
Key Issues/Main Points	Responds to key issues and main points while demonstrating an in-depth understanding.	Responds to most, but not all, the key issues and main points.	Generalizes issues and concepts without a clear understanding.	Seldom responds to key issues and main points.
Critical Thinking	Clear evidence of critical thinking, decision making, and problem solving skills.	Somewhat clear evidence of critical thinking, decision making, and problem solving skills.	Minimal evidence of critical thinking, decision making, and problem solving skills.	No evidence of critical thinking, decision making, and problem solving skills.
Creation of a Climate of Trust and Openness	Utilizes active listening and responding skills that are highly facilitative.	Utilizes active listening and responding skills that are facilitative.	Utilizes active listening and responding skills that are minimally facilitative.	Utilizes active listening and responding skills that are destructively facilitative.
Display of Sensitivity	Displays consistent sensitivity when communicating and collaborating with individuals from varied backgrounds.	Displays sensitivity when collaborating and communicating with individuals from varied backgrounds.	Displays some degree of sensitivity when collaborating and communicating with individuals from varied backgrounds.	Lacks sensitivity when collaborating and communicating with individuals from varied backgrounds.

Assignment/Project Grading Rubric				
Criteria	**Distinguished**	**Commendable**	**Acceptable**	**Failed**
Organization Evidence of a logical and meaningful consistency in the structure of the response to the structure of the assignment.	Clear focus and use of introduction, details supported by evidence with a clear connection, and a conclusion that is specific, logical, and reasonable	Logical organization. Clear focus, mostly accomplishes introduction, evidence-based and connected details, and a reasonable conclusion	Some evidence of coherent organization, but some lack of evidence or connectedness	Unsuccessful attempt to establish and communicate understanding to the reader
Completeness Evidence of having covered all parts of the assignment in the response.	Covered all the requirements of the assignment and reflects in-depth understanding through extensive explanation and use of real world examples	One or more of the requirements of the assignment covered incompletely	Unelaborated details in several places	Unelaborated details throughout the essay
Content Evidence of significant concepts and insights gained from the readings	All content is accurate, complete, and forms a coherent understanding of target concepts	Most content is accurate, complete, and forms a mostly coherent understanding of target concepts	Most content is accurate and complete, but shows some coherency.	Most content is sparse, circumspect, superfluous, and does not show coherent understanding of key concepts.
Mechanics Spelling, punctuation, and grammar are correctly used	Proper grammar, spelling, and punctuation.	A few errors in grammar, spelling, and punctuation; errors do not interfere with communication.	Some errors in spelling, punctuation, or grammar that interfere with communication.	Many errors in spelling, punctuation, or grammar.
English language learners may have differential scoring for Organization and Mechanics				

ASSIGNMENTS

This course begins June 30. There are two weekends when all students are expected to meet for class sessions. Chapter assignments will be discussed, activities to deepen understanding may be given to student teams (small groups), and tests will be administered. The assignments are meant to help students understand the important topics and interact with each other and the instructor within the limitation of four "all-day" class sessions on two weekends separated by five weeks.

- Each assignment must be typed in Word, or a wordprocessor able to be read by Word on a PC. All chapter assignments for a specific weekend should be contained in one electronic file; each chapter must be separated with a Page Break. Assignments must be single-spaced when submitted as an electronic file. Use 10-point Arial or 12-point Times-Roman font. Use complete sentences and academic language of a professional in the field of education.

- Students must print with 1.5 line spacing, staple, and submit in person in class the assignments for all chapters on the weekend agenda at the start of the scheduled class date. Students should bring a print copy to class for themselves. The first line of each chapter assignment must be " *Reviewed by instructor, date:* ". Instructor will write the date reviewed for tracking purpose (so instructor reviews any one chapter assignment once only).

  - If a student will not attend a particular class session (Saturday or Sunday), the student must inform the instructor by email and submit required assignments before Friday, 6 p.m. of the weekend session due date.

- Each assignment covers one chapter and serves as note taking and summarizing so the instructor will not ask for assignments until the chapter will be covered in class. Note-taking and summarizing are research-based effective learning strategies. Assignments reflect comprehension of topics for the instructor to determine grades (30% of grade), and prepare the student to engage in class discussions and activities (20% of grade) and tests (50% of grade). Deeper understanding comes from class discussions and activities.

- Students are encouraged to email assignments as attachments early, well before the weekend session. A student may email one or more chapters whenever he/she is ready and would like the instructor to review that part. Do not submit partial chapter assignments. The instructor will make every effort to review emailed assignments and respond as quickly as possible with helpful comments/questions to guide students in drafting final clear, accurate, useful notes. The instructor will review and respond to one first draft assignment, not any redrafts, and will write the review date at top of chapter assignment for tracking.

- Students are encouraged to ask the instructor clarifying questions by email before submitting assignments; the instructor will attempt to provide timely answers that help the student understand the material and write comprehensible notes. Questions beyond clarification (e.g., application, inferences, etc.) should be asked during class discussion; students are encouraged to note these class discussion questions at the bottom of the assignment as reminders and to alert the instructor of interesting questions or comments to address during discussion.

- While all communication has been discussed as email, there may be appropriate and possible opportunities when the instructor can initiate a phone conversation to a phone number provided by the student. This opportunity will depend on the number of students, number of requests, availability, and other circumstances.

Project

Project details will be announced at a later date after the instructor has thoroughly planned all aspects to ensure clarity, usefulness, and practicality in the time frame. Students will complete one project, an educational program evaluation report. Students will not conduct a program evaluation; students will plan an evaluation. The instructor will provide one or more real projects that he has conducted as scenarios. The instructor will consider allowing a student to work on a project of his/her selection instead of an assigned scenario. Specific information will be given to students during the first weekend session, perhaps before. Students will work on their project report during class time and between the two weekend sessions. The project tasks (see table below) reinforce and apply concepts learned from the textbook chapters and during class discussions. After class discussions, students will be given time to work on their projects and ask the instructor questions.

The project must be typed in Word, or a wordprocessor able to be read by Word on a PC. Use 10-point Arial or 12-point Times-Roman font. Use organization, format, and academic language of a professional in the field of education. The report must be submitted in print form with 1.5 line spacing (any tables or charts may be single-spaced). Students are encouraged to bring laptops to class to work on their projects; however, it is not a requirement and all liability for damage, loss, or stolen property rests with the student. The final project due date will be announced by the first day of class.

	Weekend Session: July 16 & 17	
Ch.	Discussion/Essential Questions	Project Tasks
1	1. Define educational program evaluation, identify characteristics; give examples (personal experience if possible) 2. How is evaluation different from scientific research? 3. What do defensibility; accuracy, timing, and believability have to do with utility of an evaluation study? *	
2	1. What are the purposes of evaluation? 2. What is the difference between formative and summative evaluation? 3. What stages of program development were evaluated in your defining examples (see 1.1)? 4. What is the difference between independent and "participatory or collaborative" evaluation? What is the difference between external and internal evaluation? * 5. What is the tradeoff in believability and being a learning organization sustaining continual improvement? * 6. Describe five types of evaluation questions and how do they relate to purposes of evaluation?	Describe part of the evaluation plan • Formative or summative, or both? Why? • What stages will be evaluated? • Will it be independent or participatory? Why? • What are the major evaluation questions?
3	1. What are the characteristics of a good evaluation question? Give a few specific examples from your experience/work. How are they different from pure research questions?	
4	1. What is a needs assessment? (see chapter 1) 2. What are the most important issues or points in conducting a needs assessment for a client? 3. There are times when clients do not know what they do not know— what are their true needs. How would you handle that situation? 4. There are times when the client blames others, such as parents or students, for a problem such as student failure or apathy. How would you handle that situation?	Describe the needs assessment (imagine reality) • What data would you collect, from whom, how, when, why?
5	1. What is program theory? Why is it important in evaluation? 2. What is the difference between process theory and impact theory? 3. How do flowcharts illustrate a program theory? 4. What is evaluability assessment? Compare and contrast with needs assessment.	Describe the program theory and illustrate with a flowchart
6	1. What is program process evaluation and monitoring? Give an example from your experience/work. 2. How often should "continuous evaluation" be in a school setting? Is it formative or summative evaluation? Contrast continuous and annual year-end evaluation in terms of how the feedback is used. 3. Many school leaders say they do not have management time to reflect, to continuously evaluate process and impact. They say they have too much to do, too many initiatives, requirements, and crises that keep arising. Often student achievement does not improve in those schools. Why (your reasonable opinion)?	Complete the next part of your evaluation plan— timeline during the period of program implementation. Who will do what, when, and why? You might use a chart.
	Weekend Session: August 13-14	
7	1. What is the relationship among program outcomes, change, and net effect? What is the difference between program outcome and program effect? 2. Define and discuss reliability, validity, and sensitivity when assessing program outcomes. 3. Suppose your results are accurate, highly negative, and program staff are not likely to believe your results. What steps can you take to build credibility among staff?	Identify the program outcomes in the program theory flowchart. Discuss intended and unintended outcomes. Describe how to measure the outcomes.

8	1. What is the difference between experimental and quasi-experimental research designs? In education, does the control group usually receive no intervention at all? Explain your answer. 2. Why is it difficult to conduct experimental studies in schools? 3. How can approximations to random assignment satisfy the rigor of educational research? 4. Discuss the major limitations in conducting randomized experiments.	Discuss the type of design, rationale, and feasibility.
9	1. Discuss the types of bias and interfering events that can confound true program effects. 2. Discuss different ways to determine program effects in a quasi-experimental design. 3. What can you do to strengthen the credibility that the program had an important impact on the outcomes? (Hint: the answer may not be in the book.)	Describe the quasi-experimental design, likely sources of bias, and how to avoid or lessen any biases.
10	1. Compare and contrast a statistically significant effect and a practically significant effect. 2. Can an effect be statistically significant but not practically significant? Explain. 3. Explain the role of moderator and mediator variables in determining program effects. 4. What is meta-analysis and how can it be used to build confidence in program effects? How are meta-analysis and reliability similar?	
11 (12)	1. Compare and contrast cost-benefit and cost-effectiveness analyses.	