

CJ 692 - PROGRAM EVALUATION:

ON-LINE FORMAT

(Last Updated: Spring 2008)

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Class Hours: Asynchronous Offerings
Classroom #: Blackboard Portal for this class

A. COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES

Description: The formal Catalogue description of this course says that we will dedicate the semester to the study of "principles and techniques of program evaluation including models and case studies" of evaluation techniques. While this description, in a generic sense is accurate, the primary focus of the class will not emphasize the technical aspects of program evaluation. Instead, the primary objective of the class is to provide you with exposure to a variety of evaluation techniques that have been used in different criminal/juvenile justice settings. By learning about these techniques, you will become a more intelligent "consumer" of evaluation efforts that have been completed within your constituent agency as well as other criminal justice agencies. You will also be able to identify evaluation needs in different areas of the criminal/juvenile justice system in general as well as within a particular agency in the system. As a result of the material discussed in this class, you will also be able to develop a proposal designed to guide this evaluation to a useful conclusion.

Objectives: The four primary objectives of this course are to:

- 1) Introduce students to the fundamental principles of program evaluation;
- 2) Enable students to recognize the value and appropriateness of different evaluation strategies;
- 3) Introduce students to the literature in program evaluation as it is and has been applied in criminal/juvenile justice studies; and
- 4) Help students in the formulation of a research proposal focusing on a criminal/juvenile justice related issue involving an evaluation strategy.

The overarching goal of this class is to introduce students to the different styles of program evaluation so that they can become "informed consumers" of such studies in the future. Students completing this class will be better able to evaluate the credibility and appropriateness of studies evaluating juvenile/criminal justice related programs.

ONLINE FORMAT: This particular section of this course is being presented in a fully on-line format. What this means is that 100% of the material for the class is being made available in a "fully text based" format that can be accessed through the internet and the required reading materials. What it does not mean is that the class can be completed by each student in a fully asynchronous time-frame (as would be the case in a "correspondence course" format). Students

enrolled in this section will be required to complete a specific sequence of Learning Modules within a particular time frame in order to complete the class. The timing of these assignments is designed to correspond with the delivery of the same material in the intensive weekend semester format.

The "text" for the class will include assigned reading materials drawing from "conventional" sources including a textbook which may be purchased through the various bookstores located in Huntsville or through one of the many on-line book vendors. It is each student's responsibility to purchase these materials in a timely manner and to read the assignments as specified in the Class Schedule.

Additional "text based" material will be presented through on-line discussion sessions delivered in both Asynchronous and Synchronous formats as well as through five "Learning Modules" that will include "lecture-like" material and individual work-projects designed by your professor to both supplement and compliment the text book material.

Synchronous Discussion Sessions will require students to coordinate several sessions where they will have uninterrupted access to their computer work-stations for at least a two hour period during which they will interact with the professor and other class members in a "real-time" discussion of assigned material.

B. ATTENDANCE POLICY

Class attendance requirements will be followed in accordance with Academic Policy Statement 800401. With adjustments to correspond to the on-line delivery of this class.

Attendance will be recorded as specified in each Learning Module noted below. Students will receive "Cyber-class discussion" points as described in the Grading Policy below. Failure to complete any session within the specified time-frame will result in the unrecoverable loss of the "Cyber-class discussion points" available for that Module.

C. STUDENT ABSENCES ON RELIGIOUS HOLY DAY POLICY

Please see the information located on-line at the following site:

<http://www.shsu.edu/catalog/scholasticrequirements.html#holyday>

If any of the required activities included in the Learning Modules has a due-date falling on or around a religious holy day, arrangements will be made to accommodate the needs of each individual student involved.

D. READINGS

Required:

Rossi, Peter H., Freeman, Howard E., and Mark W. Lipsey (2004). *Evaluation a Systematic Approach. Seventh Edition.* Thousand Oaks, Ca: Sage Publications.

American Psychological Association, (2001). *Publication Manual, Fifth Edition*.
Washington, D.C.: American Psychological Association.

E. CLASS REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING POLICY

Exam: There will be one examination scheduled during the semester to assess your familiarity with and comprehension of some of the basic and generic terms, concepts, theories, and issues facing program evaluators in general and evaluation of criminal/juvenile justice agencies in particular. This exam will be given during the last class session and will be both short answer and essay in nature. It is designed to assess your familiarity with the material included in the assigned readings and the Learning Modules presented throughout the semester. ***This exam will be worth up to 100 class points to be applied toward the final semester grade.***

Program Evaluation Exemplar Projects: At three times during the semester, students will be required to locate an example of a criminal/juvenile justice related evaluation that exemplifies one of the types of program evaluation being studied in this class and prepare a brief (3-4 page) critique of the methodology used. Each project requires that students locate an example of a research publication evaluating a criminal/juvenile justice agency using one of the methodologies focused upon in the assigned reading material being discussed during the weekend session it is due. Students must submit a copy of the source being used for the exemplar as well as a written critique of the article using material in Rossi *et al.* to help frame your comments.

Students can earn up to 35 class points for each exemplar for a maximum of 105 class points to be applied toward the final semester grade. Points will be awarded on the basis of each exemplar's salience (10 points) and the critique's clarity (10 points), direct use of Rossi *et al.* (10 points), and full and appropriate source citation process (5 points). Points lost for Exemplar Projects can not be recovered.

Cyber-Source Projects: All students will be required to complete a series of assignments designed to familiarize you with: 1) the use of the World Wide Web as an information resource; and 2) the use of program evaluation in a variety of different contexts. These assignments will be completed on-line through the Blackboard Academic Suite, an e-Education platform we use at SHSU to enhance the educational experiences of our students.

The formal elements of these projects are identified in the "Assignments" folder located in the class Blackboard Portal. All students enrolled in this class have been automatically registered into the platform and can access it by inserting the appropriate user identification information in the spaces provided at <http://blackboard.shsu.edu/>

The projects will be completed as part of four Learning Modules that will become available for completion in the time-frame specified in the **ANNOTATED COURSE OUTLINE AND SCHEDULE OF READINGS AND ASSIGNMENTS** below. ***Each Module will be worth a maximum of 25 class points for a total of 100 class points to be applied toward your final semester grade.***

Class participation/Synchronous On-Line Discussion Groups: All students are required to participate in five different "on-line" discussion sessions that will require you to reflect on issues

related to the Learning Modules used throughout the semester. EACH OF THESE DISCUSSION SESSIONS IS EXPECTED TO LAST APPROXIMATELY TWO HOURS and will be responsive to particular questions or issues raised by your professor and posted to you prior to each session. The specific dates and times for these sessions will be determined in consultation with the students during the first week of classes. If necessary the class will be split into smaller discussion groups which will be managed through the "Groups" page at the class Blackboard portal.

There will be five different group discussion sessions required throughout the semester and they will be conducted using the class Blackboard's "Collaboration" program which allows students to conduct their discussions in a "real time" chat environment. These sessions are designed to provide you with an opportunity to demonstrate your familiarity with the material included in the Learning Modules by discussing particular issues associated with the different evaluation methodologies being examined.

On the dates specified in the Class Schedule, your professor will publish the specific questions you will be required to discuss and will announce when the discussion sessions will be held. Your professor will either participate in or monitor all of your discussions and your participation in these sessions will be recorded and evaluated by your professor.

WARNING: EVERYTHING YOU WRITE WHILE IN THE COLLABORATION SESSION IS RECORDED AND AVAILABLE FOR VIEWING BY ANYONE WHO IS IN THIS CLASS. WHILE YOU ARE THERE, CONDUCT YOURSELVES ACCORDINGLY!

Feedback concerning the quality of each of these discussions will be given to the group as well as to individual students following each assigned session. Individual participants in each of the sessions will be awarded up to 10 points for each session for a total of 50 class points possible. These points will be awarded by your professor based on the following criteria:

- Responsiveness (5 points) - Do your comments accurately and fully focus on each of the issues raised in the assignment? ;
- Support (3 points) - Do you rely on the assigned readings along with additional outside information to help inform your discussions and;
- Involvement (2 points) - Do you (individually) contribute to the discussion in a clear and meaningful way?

Much of the time in class will be spent in both synchronous and asynchronous form involving *ad hoc* interactions with the professor and other student(s) also completing the class in an on-line format. As such, you become largely responsible for the learning process both on the individual level as well as on the collective level. I will assume primary responsibility for the substance of what you are supposed to learn; we share responsibility for how you learn it and, therefore, for how well you learn it!

Students who fail to participate in one or more of the Synchronous Discussion Sessions for any reason will lose the points available for those sessions.

Final Semester Grades will be awarded using the following scale:

- A = 320 - 355 (90-100%)
- B = 284 - 319 (80-89%)
- C = 249 - 283 (70 - 79%)
- F = < 249 (< 70%)

Optional Assignment (Grades Deferred until Summer):

Emergent Issues (EIPP) Portfolio Project: Students planning to enroll in CJ 688 (Emergent Issues in Criminal Justice Leadership) during the summer are invited to develop a paper designed to establish the foundation for a Portfolio Project that will be required of all degree students enrolled in one of our Master of Science programs. The portfolio project will be completed next semester under the auspices of CJ 688 but you can begin to develop it during this semester.

The EIPP will be developed in 4 stages. Since the class is offered during the Summer session, it is strongly recommended that students planning to graduate in August begin their projects as early as possible. The purpose of this optional assignment is to provide students with an opportunity to complete the first two steps of their projects during the Spring semester. Note that only two stages of the project can be completed during the timeframe covered by this semester and all points earned for these assignments will be applied to the Summer session and will not effect this semester's grades.

The specific nature, length, and format for work to be submitted at each stage of the EIPP will be discussed in class. Please note that any written materials submitted are to be "word processed" and a double spaced "electronic copy" of each section must be submitted to your professor within the specified deadlines. **NO HARD COPIES OF EMI PROJECT MATERIAL NEEDS TO BE SUBMITTED.** Written material submitted during each stage will be evaluated and returned with recommendations for revision.

EIPP material will be evaluated in four sequential stages for a total of 100 possible points applied toward your final EMI Portfolio Project grade. Students do not pursue this optional assignment will be required to complete all 4 stages of the EIPP during the summer; those who complete the optional assignment will only have 2 stages to complete during the Summer.

Additional information describing the requirements for EIIPs will be distributed during the first full class session.

F. MAKE-UP EXAMS

If a student fails to complete the exam during the time set forth in the Annotated Course Outline, a make-up exam will be designed and administered as soon as possible. This exam will be graded

based on the same criteria as the regularly scheduled exam but **will be reduced by one grade-point for each day beyond the regularly scheduled date it is administered (e.g. an exam taken three days late will be graded and the points earned will be reduced by three points).**

G. ACADEMIC HONESTY

The Faculty of the College of Criminal Justice expects students to conduct their academic work with integrity and honesty. Acts of academic dishonesty will not be tolerated and can result in the failure of a course and dismissal from the University.

Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, cheating on a test, plagiarism, collusion - the unauthorized collaboration with another person in preparing work offered for credit, the abuse of resource materials, and misrepresentation of credentials or accomplishments as a member of the college.

The University's policy on academic honesty and appeal procedures can be found in the manual entitled *Student Guidelines*, distributed by Division of Student Services (Reference Section 5.3 of the SHSU Student Guidelines).

Students are encouraged to review the statements presented in the Sam Houston State University's Guidelines that refer to instances of "academic dishonesty" (available in the Office of Student Life or on-line at <http://www.shsu.edu/students/guide/studlife.html#conduct>). In accordance with the statement, any student engaged in academic dishonesty in this class will receive an "F" for the semester and will, consequently, be terminated from the graduate program.

The professor may require that written material submitted in fulfillment of any of the requirements for this class (including exams) be submitted for an evaluation through Turnitin.com so all work submitted must include appropriate source citation and must represent the original work of the student with appropriate source attributions. Information about Turnitin.com can be found at their web-site <http://www.turnitin.com>.

H. DISABLED STUDENT POLICY:

“Students with a disability which affects their academic performance are expected to arrange for a conference with the instructor in order that appropriate strategies can be considered to ensure that participation and achievement opportunities are not impaired.” The physically impaired may contact the Director of the Counseling Center as chair of the Committee for Continuing Assistance for Disabled Students by telephone (ext. 1720).

Any student in this class may request special learning assistance by submitting a written statement describing your particular need. If it is necessary, you will be directed to the University's Counseling Center for additional assistance, however, most needs should be able to be accommodated directly through your professor. Please feel free to discuss any particular need you may have with your professor. The University Policy governing special learning needs is available at the attached link: <http://www.shsu.edu/students/guide/studlife.html#disabilities>.

I. SERVICES FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Please see the information located on-line at the following site

J. CONNECTIVITY PROBLEMS

This class requires that you be able to regularly gain access to the World Wide Web. That means you are responsible for maintaining connectivity with a computer compatible with the technical requirements to fully participate in the assignments. Any material submitted to your professor for grading must be sent in a format compatible with Microsoft Word or saved as a "Rich Text Format" (RTF) document and you are advised to keep a "hard copy" as well as a back-up copy of your material in case of technical problems.

K. COPYRIGHT STATEMENT

This class is being offered under the auspices of Sam Houston State University's College of Criminal Justice. All material produced and distributed for this class is protected under the policies and laws governing the instructional practices of this institution. Duplication and/or use of this material, in part or in whole, must first receive the express written consent of the instructor.

L. ANNOTATED COURSE OUTLINE AND SCHEDULE OF READINGS AND ASSIGNMENTS

Jan. 14 - Jan. 27 OVERVIEW LEARNING MODULE (UNGRADED)

This Module will be dedicated to the introduction of students to one another and to the professor as well as to a review of the class requirements and deadlines.

UNGRADED SYNCHRONOUS DISCUSSION SESSION HELD DURING
WEEK OF 1/21

Jan 28 - Feb. 10 LEARNING MODULE 1: Evaluation Research in Context

Styles of Science
The Role of Theory
Ethical Issues

REQUIRED READING: Rossi *et al.* - Preface; Chapters 1, 2, and 3.

LEARNING MODULE 1 AND CYBER-SOURCE PROJECT 1 WILL

BECOME AVAILABLE AT THE CLASS Bb SITE

SYNCHRONOUS DISCUSSION SESSION 1 WILL BE HELD DURING THE
WEEK OF 2/4

This section of the class will introduce students to the basic principles and history of program evaluation as it has been applied in both private and public sector settings. Included will be a review of the social and political context of program evaluation, the role theory plays in both the development of social service/intervention programs and the development of evaluation questions designed to examine such programs. Ethical issues facing social science researchers in general and criminal justice evaluators in particular will also be examined.

Feb. 11 - Mar 2 LEARNING MODULE 2: Needs Assessments, Program Theory Explication, and Strategies for Monitoring and Accountability
REQUIRED READING: Rossi *et al.* – Chapters 4, 5, and 6.
LEARNING MODULE 2 AND CYBER-SOURCE PROJECT 2 WILL BECOME AVAILABLE AT THE CLASS Bb SITE
SYNCHRONOUS DISCUSSION SESSION 2 WILL BE HELD DURING THE WEEK OF 2/25

This section of the class is designed to introduce students to the use of needs assessments, theory explication, program monitoring, and program accountability in the review of social programs. Special attention is also given to the use of these techniques in criminal/juvenile justice contexts.

Feb 18 - EXEMPLAR PROJECT 1 DUE
Find a journal article involving a criminal/juvenile justice based needs assessment; theory explication, program monitoring, or program accountability and bring it to class with a brief written methodological critique drawing from Rossi *et al.*'s material to help frame your critique.

Mar 3 - Mar 30 LEARNING MODULE 3: Evaluation Strategies for Impact Assessment and Evaluating Full-Coverage Programs
REQUIRED READING: Rossi *et al.* – Chapters 7, 8, and 9.
LEARNING MODULE 3 AND CYBER-SOURCE PROJECT 3 WILL BECOME AVAILABLE AT THE CLASS Bb SITE
SYNCHRONOUS DISCUSSION SESSION 3 WILL BE HELD DURING THIS TIME PERIOD

This section of the class is designed to introduce students to the use of the different forms of impact assessment used in the evaluation of social programs. Special attention is also given to the use of these techniques in criminal/juvenile justice contexts.

Mar 10 - Mar 16 SPRING BREAK - NO ASSIGNMENTS

Mar 17 EXEMPLAR PROJECT 2 DUE (Find a journal article involving criminal/juvenile justice based impact assessment or full coverage program evaluation and bring it to class with a brief written methodological critique drawing from Rossi *et al.*'s material to help frame your critique.)

Mar 31 - Apr 20 LEARNING MODULE 4: Meta Analysis, and Cost/Efficiency Evaluations
REQUIRED READING: Rossi *et al.* – Chapters 10 and 11.
LEARNING MODULE 4 AND CYBER-SOURCE PROJECT 4 WILL BECOME AVAILABLE AT THE CLASS Bb SITE
SYNCHRONOUS DISCUSSION SESSION 4 WILL BE HELD DURING THE

WEEK OF 4/7

This section of the class is designed to introduce students to the different evaluation strategies available for the evaluation of full coverage programs and the efficiency analysis of social programs. Special attention is also given to the use of these techniques in criminal/juvenile justice contexts.

Apr 7 EXEMPLAR PROJECT 3 DUE (Find a journal article involving a cost or efficiency analysis of a justice related program and bring it to class with a brief written methodological critique drawing from Rossi *et al.*'s material to help frame your critique.)

Apr 21 - LEARNING MODULE 5: Dissemination of Evaluation Results and Encouragement of Effective Utilization
REQUIRED READING: Rossi *et al.* – Chapter 12
LEARNING MODULE 5 AND CYBER-SOURCE PROJECT 5 WILL BECOME AVAILABLE AT THE CLASS Bb SITE
SYNCHRONOUS DISCUSSION SESSION 5 WILL BE HELD DURING THE WEEK OF 4/28

This section of the class is designed to introduce students to the different methods available to disseminate the results of program evaluation and to encourage the maximal use of such studies. Special attention is also given to the use of these techniques in criminal/juvenile justice contexts.

May 2 EXAM (Comprehensive Exam Covering All Class Material)