Program Evaluation
HD 5644 (PHS 5644)
CRN 87511, Fall 2014

Schedule: Meet 5:30-8:20 pm on Wednesdays in Wallace Hall room 407.
Instructor: Christine Kaestle, MSPH, Ph.D.
Office Hours: Thursday 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. or by appointment, 315 Wallace Hall Email: kaestle@vt.edu

Course Description and Purpose: HD 5644 is designed to prepare students to conduct evaluation research on prevention and intervention programs for individuals and families. Broad coverage is given to the major dimensions of evaluation research strategies, including process evaluation, impact assessment, and cost analysis. Students gain practical experience through a series of exercises in which they design a conceptual framework, develop research questions, operationalize measures, and write an impact evaluation plan. This course covers experimental, quasi-experimental, and non-experimental study designs, including the strengths and limitations of each.

Students with Special Needs: If you need adaptations or accommodations because of a disability (learning disability, attention deficit disorder, psychological, physical, sensory, etc.), if you have emergency medical information to share with me, or if you need special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, please make an appointment with me as soon as possible.

Honor Code: This class will operate according to the expectations and responsibilities set forth by the Virginia Tech Honor System. I will report suspected violations of plagiarism or cheating on homeworks, tests and written assignments. All work must be your own unless you are specifically directed to collaborate with peers on a project or written assignment. Any quoted material must be properly credited to the author, cited in the document, and included in a list of references. You may not use any written material that is purchased from a document supplier. You may not copy material from the Internet without proper citation and documentation of the source. You may not use material from an assignment for another class without citing the previous assignment and discussing the use of the material with both instructors.

General Expectations: As this is a graduate seminar it is expected that the required reading will be completed prior to each class meeting. In addition it is expected that all students will attend and be active participants in each class period. Please turn off all cell phones and pagers. Keep laptops closed and wait until after class to check email, surf the net, etc., as this can be distracting to me and to your fellow students and has been shown to result in lower test scores (see articles on Scholar).

Specific Requirements:
Required Readings: Students can expect about 4 or more chapters or articles per week as listed in table below. Readings are are posted on Scholar.

In Class Examinations I & II: Exam I and Exam II will help you master and integrate the class material. The tests will include both short answer and short essay questions. You are responsible for material from all of the readings and class sessions. If you have missed a class session, you are responsible for making arrangements with your fellow classmates to obtain the material. The instructor will not provide class notes. Make-up exams are not permitted except in emergencies documented by the Dean of Students office.

Homeworks: Most readings will have review and discussion questions to assist in the review of important concepts and to promote thought for class discussion. In addition, students will complete exercises focused on a program or intervention of the student's choice and will apply approaches learned in class to explore how to plan an evaluation. Assignments will be related to identifying appropriate type(s) of evaluation, developing evaluation questions, structuring data collection, and choosing a study design. Homework should be neatly typed and proof-read as a word document to be submitted on Scholar dropbox before the class session begins (file name = HW#_yourname, e.g., HW3_kaestle) and brought in as a hard copy during class. There will be no make-ups for homework, but I will drop the lowest score from your final grade to accommodate legitimate emergencies. You may NOT work together or share answers before class.

In-Class Activities: We will often engage in problem solving activities and peer critques to improve subject mastery during class time. Sometimes class activities will depend on students completing and bringing in homework assignments. In-class activity write-ups will be collected at the end of class. No points are given if you do not attend a class, if you miss the beginning or end of class, or if the assignment is judged to be incomplete/insufficient. While you cannot make up in-class activities, I will drop the two lowest scores to accommodate legitimate absences.
Evaluation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class Activities, drop two lowest scores</th>
<th>10%</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Homeworks, drop lowest score</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Exam I</td>
<td>35%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Exam II</td>
<td>35%</td>
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
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Note: Class discussion will also affect course grades, especially in borderline cases.

Grading Scale:

- **A** 93 and above
- **A-** 90 to 92.99
- **B+** 87 to 89.99
- **B** 83 to 86.99
- **B-** 80 to 82.99
- **C+** 77 to 79.99
- **C** 73 to 76.99
- **C-** 70 to 72.99
- **D+** 67 to 69.99
- **D** 63 to 66.99
- **D-** 60 to 62.99
- **F** Below 60

Tentative Schedule:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ses.</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Homework Due</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>8/27</td>
<td>Introduction and Logic Models</td>
<td>HW1</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>9/3</td>
<td>Before You Start an Evaluation</td>
<td>HW2</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>9/10</td>
<td>Theories of Behavior and Change</td>
<td>HW3</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>9/17</td>
<td>Process Evaluation and Program Fidelity</td>
<td>HW4</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>9/24</td>
<td>Measurement Issues</td>
<td>HW5</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>10/1</td>
<td>Sampling Design</td>
<td>HW6</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>10/8</td>
<td>Ethics (online session)</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>10/15</td>
<td>EXAM 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>10/22</td>
<td>Study Design and Random Assignment</td>
<td>HW7</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>10/29</td>
<td>Experiments and Quasi-Experiments</td>
<td>HW8</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>11/5</td>
<td>Causation, Internal Validity, Other Designs</td>
<td>HW9</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>11/12</td>
<td>Internal Validity Review, Statistical Validity, Type I and II Errors</td>
<td>HW10</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>11/19</td>
<td>Systematic Reviews, Mediation, Moderation</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>12/3</td>
<td>Applying Evaluation Research to Real World Problems</td>
<td>HW11</td>
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<td>15</td>
<td>12/10</td>
<td>EXAM 2</td>
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<td>DUE at 7 pm on 12/16</td>
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<td>HW12: extra credit</td>
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Required Readings (subject to change):

The readings below include chapters (available on scholar) from the following textbooks:


**Session 1: Introduction and Logic Models**

**Required:**

- Wholey Chapter 1: Using Logic Models
- Frechtling Chapter 7: Using a Logic Model to Identify Evaluation Questions

**Optional:**

- Frechtling Chapter 3: Logic Model Components

Session 2: Evaluation Overview and Needs Assessment

Required:

Rossi Lipsey & Freeman Chapter 4: Needs Assessment

Optional:

Session 3: Theories of Behavior and Change

Required:


Session 4: Process Evaluation and Program Fidelity

Required:
Rossi Lipsey & Freeman Chapter 6: Process Evaluation


Optional:


Session 5: Measurement Issues

Required:
Rossi Lipsey & Freeman Chapter 7: Measuring Program Outcomes


Optional (qualitative data and evaluation):
Nachmias: Research Methods in the Social Sciences Chapter 12: Qualitative Research

Weiss, R. S. (2004). In their own words: Making the most of qualitative interviews. Contexts, 3(4), 44-51.


Session 6: Sampling

Required:
Nachmias: Research Methods in the Social Sciences Chapter 8: Sampling and Sampling Designs

Optional (data collection techniques):
Nachmias: Research Methods in the Social Sciences Chapter 9: Observational Methods
Nachmias: Research Methods in the Social Sciences Chapter 10: Survey Research
Nachmias: Research Methods in the Social Sciences Chapter 11: Questionnaire Construction

Session 7: Ethics (online day)

Required:

Session 8: Exam I

Session 9: Study Design and Random Assignment

Required:
Rossi Lipsey & Freeman Chapter 8: Assessing Program Impacts: Randomized Field Experiments.

Optional:

Joke:

Session 10: Experiments and Quasi-Experiments

Required:

Optional:
Session 11: Causation, Internal Validity, Other Designs
Required:
Rossi Lipsey & Freeman Chapter 9: Assessing Program Impacts: Alternative Designs

Optional:

Session 12: Internal Validity Review, Statistical Validity, Type I and II Errors
Required:
Rossi Lipsey & Freeman Chapter 10: Interpreting Effects (concentrate on error types)
Optional:
Weiss & Jacobs Chapter 10: Design Problems

Session 13: Systematic Reviews, Mediation, Moderation
Required:
Wholey Chapter 7: Meta-analyses and Reviews
Rossi Lipsey & Freeman Chapter 10: Interpreting Effects (review sections on mediation and moderation)
Pick One:

Session 14: Applying Evaluation Research to Real World Problems
Required:
Wholey Chapter 18: Cost Effectiveness and Cost Benefit Analysis
Wholey Chapter 19: Pitfalls of Evaluation
Optional:
Wholey Chapter 23: The Use of Evaluation by Non-profit Organizations

Session 15: Exam 2