Course Description
This course introduces students to policy and program evaluation. Topics include tailoring evaluations; identifying issues and formulating questions; assessing the need for a program; expressing and assessing program theory; assessing and monitoring program process; measuring and monitoring program outcomes; assessing program impacts; detecting, interpreting, and analyzing program effects; and measuring efficiency. The final project will be a program evaluation synthesis of a (a) federal, (b) state, (c) county, or (d) municipal program based on the student’s choice.

Learning Outcomes
At the conclusion of this course, students should

- be knowledgeable about the general fundamental concepts of policy and program evaluation;
- be knowledgeable about and be able to collect select data for policy and program evaluation;
- possess the skills needed to select methods appropriate for policy and program evaluation;
- possess the skills needed to interpret results based on policy and program evaluation; and
- be knowledgeable about and be able to communicate and present evaluation findings to public policy makers and other non-technical audiences in a way understandable to them.
Class Website
This class uses Blackboard in order to enhance the online learning experience of students. This website contains the class syllabus and the class readings. Source: https://mymasonportal.gmu.edu/ -> courses

Course Materials
Required Readings:


Course Requirements:
Prerequisite
Students who have not yet taken PUBP 511, PUBP 704, or an equivalent class need permission of the instructor.

Class Attendance/Participation/Behavior
Students are required to attend class. Many educational studies have shown a high causation between class attendance and high grades. If students have to miss class for professional, i.e., a time conflict at work, or medical reasons they are expected to notify the instructor in advance and to familiarize themselves with the materials missed in class. Students are expected to participate in class discussions. Many educational studies have shown a high causation between participation in class discussions and high grades. Students are expected to arrive on time.

Reading Assignments
Students are required to familiarize themselves with and understand the class readings before each class. Readings will be discussed during class time.

Writing Assignments/Final Paper/Deadlines
The final project will be a program evaluation synthesis of a (a) federal, (b) state, (c) county, or (d) municipal program based on the student’s choice. Class grades will be based on
- a first draft (Microsoft Word document to be submitted to kanacker@gmu.edu by February 27th; at least 200 words; 12.5% of the grade)
- a second draft (Microsoft Word document to be submitted to kanacker@gmu.edu by March 27th; at least 400 words; 12.5% of the grade)
- a final presentation (15 minutes maximum, prezi; 25% of the grade);
- a final paper, i.e., a program evaluation synthesis (eight evaluations minimum; 10 pages minimum, 12 pt. font, double spaced; excluding a potential technical appendix; 50%).
Assignment Submission, Late or Missing Assignments
Drafts are due as e-mail submission to the instructor only. A draft that was submitted after the deadline is considered late. Students will lose 20 (out of 100) points every 24 hours after the deadline. On the first day of class a sign up list for the final presentations will be made available. On presentation day, students are expected to be arrive at the beginning of class (7:20 pm), i.e., students are discouraged from arriving at the presentation time predicted by them. A presentation that was not held in person, i.e., in absence, is not considered a presentation. Students will lose 25 (out of 100) points for presentations held in absence. Final papers are due on the day of the presentation at the beginning of the presentation. A paper that was handed in after the deadline is considered late. Students will lose 20 (out of 100) points every 24 hours after the deadline. After five days assignments will not be evaluated by the instructor (zero grade).
Final papers are due as paper submission to the instructor only. Students will lose 5 (out of 100) points for not submitting the final paper as a paper submission to the instructor at the beginning of the presentation.

Appeals on the paper grade must be made in writing within 72 hours after commented papers have been made available. Final class grades are non-negotiable.

Academic Accommodation for a Disability
If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please see the instructor and contact the Office of Disability Services. All academic accommodations must be arranged through the Office of Disability Services (http://ods.gmu.edu/).

GMU/Schar School Policy on Plagiarism
The profession of scholarship and the intellectual life of a university as well as the field of public policy inquiry depend fundamentally on a foundation of trust. Thus, any act of plagiarism strikes at the heart of the meaning of the university and the purpose of the School of Policy, Government, and International Affairs. It constitutes a serious breach of professional ethics and it is unacceptable. Plagiarism is the use of another’s words or ideas presented as one’s own. It includes, among other things, the use of specific words, ideas, or frameworks that are the product of another’s work. Honesty and thoroughness in citing sources is essential to professional accountability and personal responsibility. Appropriate citation is necessary so that arguments, evidence, and claims can be critically examined.

Plagiarism is wrong because of the injustice it does to the person whose ideas are stolen. But it is also wrong because it constitutes lying to one’s professional colleagues. From a prudential perspective, it is shortsighted and self-defeating, and it can ruin a professional career.

The faculty of the School of the School of Policy, Government, and International Affairs takes plagiarism seriously and has adopted a zero tolerance policy. Any plagiarized assignment will receive an automatic grade of “F.” This may lead to failure for the course, resulting in dismissal from the University. This dismissal will be noted on the student’s transcript. For international students who are on a university-sponsored visa (e.g., F-1, J-1 or J-2), dismissal also results in the revocation of their visa.
To help enforce the Schar School policy on plagiarism, all written work submitted in partial fulfillment of course or degree requirements must be available in electronic form so that it can be compared with electronic databases, as well as submitted to commercial services to which the School subscribes. Faculty may at any time submit student’s work without prior permission from the student. Individual instructors may require that written work be submitted in electronic as well as printed form. The Schar School policy on plagiarism is supplementary to the George Mason University Honor Code; it is not intended to replace it or substitute for it. http://schar.gmu.edu/current-students/masters-advising/academic-policies-forms/

Resources:
GMU Writing Center http://writingcenter.gmu.edu/
GMU Libraries http://library.gmu.edu/
GMU Counseling and Psychological Services http://caps.gmu.edu/
GMU Emergency Preparedness Guides https://ehs.gmu.edu/emergencymanagement/plans-guides/

Course Outline
January 23  Topic: Introduction to Class, Introduction to Policy and Program Evaluation

Study Assignment for January 23rd:


Assignment (due January 30th):
Think about a (a) federal, (b) state, (c) county, or (d) municipal program to be synthesized for the final project. Be prepared to present your thoughts in class.

January 30  Topic: Understanding Approaches to Evaluation and Select Ones that Work: The Comprehensive Evaluation Typology
Study Assignments for January 30th:


Guest Speaker: Helen McManus, SPP Library Liaison.

Please bring a laptop or tablet to class.
Please bring the worksheet “Nam et al. 2013” to class, available on Blackboard.

Assignment (due February 6th):
Think about a (a) federal, (b) state, (c) county, or (d) municipal program to be synthesized for the final project. Be prepared to present your thoughts in class.

February 6  Topic: Logic Models and the Action Model/Change Model Schema (Program Theory)
Study Assignments for February 6th:

Please bring the worksheet “Weathers & Bailey 2014” to class, available on Blackboard.

Assignment (due February 13th):
Think about a (a) federal, (b) state, (c) county, or (d) municipal program to be synthesized for the final project. Be prepared to present your thoughts in class.

February 13 Topic: Helping Stakeholders Clarify a Program Plan: Program Scope
Study Assignments for February 13th:


Please bring the worksheet “Bowen et al. 2014” to class, available on Blackboard.

Assignment (due February 20th):
Think about a (a) federal, (b) state, (c) county, or (d) municipal program to be synthesized for the final project. Be prepared to present your thoughts in class.

February 20 Topic: Helping Stakeholders Clarify a Program Plan: Action Plan
Study Assignments for February 20th:

Please bring the worksheet “Browne and LaLumia 2014” to class, available on Blackboard.

Assignment (due February 27th):
Prepare a draft of at least 200 words about a potential program evaluation synthesis for a (a) federal, (b) state, (c) county, or (d) municipal program. Submit this abstract to kanacker@gmu.edu.

February 27 Topic: Constructive Process Evaluation Tailored for the Initial Implementation
Study Assignments for February 27th:


Please bring the worksheet “Heinrich et al. 2013” to class, available on Blackboard.

Assignment (due March 6th):
Think about a (a) federal, (b) state, (c) county, or (d) municipal program to be synthesized for the final project. Be prepared to present your thoughts in class.

March 6 Topic: Assessing Implementation in the Mature Implementation Stage
Study Assignments for March 6th:

Please bring the worksheet “Hemelt & Marcotte 2013” to class, available on Blackboard.

March 13  No class – spring break!

Assignment (due March 20th):
Be prepared to talk about the status of your program evaluation synthesis in class.

March 20  Topic: Program Monitoring and the Development of a Monitoring System
Study Assignments for March 20th:


Please bring the worksheet “Bennear et al. 2013” to class, available on Blackboard.

Assignment (due March 27th):
Prepare a draft of at least 400 words about a potential program evaluation synthesis for a (a) federal, (b) state, (c) county, or (d) municipal program. Submit this abstract to kanacker@gmu.edu.

March 27  Topic: Constructive Outcome Evaluations
Study Assignments for March 27th:


Please bring the worksheet “Imberman and Kugler 2014” to class, available on Blackboard.
Assignment (due April 3rd):
Be prepared to talk about the status of your program evaluation synthesis in class.

April 3
Topic: The Experimentation Evaluation Approach to Outcome Evaluations
Study Assignments for April 3rd:


Please bring the worksheet “Wolf et al. 2013” to class, available on Blackboard.

note: April 4th to 9th instructor at academic conference of the Association of American Geographers (AAG) in Boston, MA – intermittent access to e-mail – apologies for delay in responding

Assignment (due April 10th):
Be prepared to talk about the status of your program evaluation synthesis in class.

April 10
Topic: The Holistic Effectuality Evaluation Approach to Outcome Evaluation
Study Assignments for April 10th:


Please bring the worksheet “Leos-Urban 2014” to class, available on Blackboard.

Assignment (due April 17th):
Be prepared to talk about the status of your program evaluation synthesis in class.
April 17  
**Topics:** The Theory-Driven Approach to Outcome Evaluation

**Study Assignments for April 17th:**


**Please bring the worksheet “Clayton 2014” to class, available on Blackboard.**

Note: April 19th to 22nd instructor at academic conference of the Urban Affairs Association (UAA) in Minneapolis, MN – intermittent access to e-mail – apologies for delay in responding

April 24  
**Topic:** In-class presentations of final project

May 1  
**Topic:** In-class presentations of final project

May 8  
**Reading Day – no class**

May 15  
**Topic:** In-class presentations of final project

Grades will be posted on patriotweb.gmu.edu after May 17, 10p. 
**Graded finals will be available at the following locations:**
- from Friday, May 19, 2017 to Sunday, December 31, 2017: Barbara Hill (Founders Hall 509; bhill11@gmu.edu; 703.993.3179)
- from Monday, January 1, 2018 to Saturday, June 30, 2018: GMU Records Management (please make arrangements with the instructor)
- after Sunday, July 1, 2018 finals will be shredded