Course Description
This course will survey research methods applicable to the evaluation of public policy. Course topics will cover fundamental techniques and practices of program evaluation for effectiveness in program administration. The course contrasts deductive and inductive approaches as well as the advantages of using evaluation as a mechanism for program improvement.

Course Objectives
This course aims to develop an understanding of policy and program evaluation, through the development of evaluation research skill. Such skills will provide students with the means to inform public policy and program development through analysis and assessment. Below are some key course objectives:

- To foster a systematic way to think critically about public policy and programs.
- To equip students with the tools that will enable them to inform public policy decisions.
- To develop an understanding of alternative evaluation concepts and approaches, as well as models/theories used in contemporary evaluation.
- To equip students with the skills to design a competent and comprehensive evaluation proposal. To introduce students to a number of evaluation approaches and develop an understanding as to which approaches are appropriate to what contexts and values and expertise.
- To develop awareness of the social, political, ethical, organizational, and interpersonal problems which often undermine the quality of evaluations and evaluation results.

Demonstrated Competencies
- Understand basic components of evaluation research in the social sciences.
- Define the link between ethics and theory in evaluation research.
- Demonstrate the ability to use observational techniques in experiments, survey research, qualitative field research, unobtrusive research and evaluation research.
- Demonstrate the ability to write an evaluation research proposal.
Course Requirements
- Each student must complete the assigned readings as scheduled and on time.
- Each student must actively participate in class discussions.
- Each student must complete all assignments and submit them on time.
- Each student must be respectful of other students’ ideas and experiences.

Required Text:

Supplemental Text:

Suggested Text:

Policy Think-Tank Link
http://www.sourcewatch.org/index.php?title=Think_tanks

Grade Weights
Class Preparation, Quality Participation, and Engagement (including homework, quizzes, and in-class exercises) 25%
Midterm Exam (Brightspace) 35%
Final Requirement Group Project Paper 25%
Presentation 15%
100%
Grade Calculations
The final grade will be calculated as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Overall score</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A+</td>
<td>97.00-100.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>93.00-96.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90.00-92.99</td>
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<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>87.00-89.99</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>83.00-86.99</td>
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<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>80.00-82.99</td>
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<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>77.00-79.99</td>
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<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>73.00-76.99</td>
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<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>70.00-72.99</td>
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<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>60.00-69.99</td>
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<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>&lt;60.00</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Class Preparation, Quality Participation, and Engagement
The classroom is an open forum in which all relevant contributions are welcomed and valued. During class sessions, the instructor will present material, pose questions for discussion (oral quiz), help the class focus on points of dispute, and aid in the process of critical inquiry. Some time may be devoted to individual or group exercises.

Students are expected to attend class, complete all readings and assignments on time, and actively participate in discussions and in-class exercises. As mentioned below, attendance and the level and quality of students’ contributions are a grading factor in the course. Students will have the opportunity to lead class discussions during the semester as a part of the class preparation and quality participation grade.

I consider how frequently, valuable, and constructive a student’s contribution is to class discussions and exercises. This course relies on quality student participation to function properly. I will call on students by name to address discussion topics, so I expect that you will have completed the required readings for each class. I strongly recommend that you supplement the required readings with others drawn from the suggested resources list and other policy evaluation literature sources.

Brightspace is the learning platform for the course assignments and communications. Please check course content and email frequently for assignments, readings, and requirements. The instructor will communicate with you through Brightspace and will expect your electronic communication through Brightspace as well. Please be aware of the Brightspace maintenance schedule (provided online) when Brightspace will be unavailable.
Policy on Class Attendance, Absences, and Late Assignments
GSU Policy on Class Attendance
Students are expected to attend class and abide by the instructor’s attendance/absence policy (stated in the course syllabus). This pertains to face-to-face classes as well as on-line/hybrid classes. Students may receive excused absences for the following as listed in the Student Code of Conduct Manual (p.45): http://codeofconduct.gsu.edu/files/2013/03/2015-2016-StudentHandbook.pdf. Please provide appropriate documentation as evidence for an excused absence. You must maintain at least an 80% on-time attendance rate to remain in the course.

The quality of this class is contingent on the diversity of ideas and perspectives shared in class so please try to minimize absences. If you plan to miss a class, please notify the instructor at least 2 days in advance. Unexcused absences will negatively impact your grade.

No late assignments will be accepted. The assignment is due when it is scheduled to be submitted.

There will be no make-up exams or assignments. A death in the immediate family and your hospitalization are the only two reasons that come to mind for missing an assignment or exam. In either of these cases, I should be notified as soon as possible and no later than the start of the test or deadline.

In only rare circumstances will I award a grade of Incomplete. As with the exams and assignments, a death in the immediate family and your hospitalization are the only two reasons that would persuade me to give you an Incomplete.

Reasonable Accommodations
Students with disabilities that could affect their ability to participate or perform well in the course should see me early in the semester. I am receptive to these situations and will make reasonable accommodations. Students who wish to request accommodation for a disability may do so by registering with the Office of Disability Services (ODS). Students may only be accommodated upon issuance by ODS of a signed Accommodation Plan and are responsible for providing a copy of that plan to me.

Plagiarism and Academic Honesty
Established rules covering plagiarism and academic honesty must be followed at all times. It is the student's responsibility to know the meaning of plagiarism and when it occurs. “As members of the academic community, students are expected to recognize and uphold standards of intellectual and academic integrity. The university assumes as a basic and minimum standard of conduct in academic matters that students be honest and that they submit for credit only the products of their own efforts. Both the ideals of scholarship and the need for fairness require that all dishonest work be rejected as a basis for academic credit. They also require that students refrain from any and all forms of dishonorable or unethical conduct related to their academic work.”
The university's policy on academic honesty is published in the Faculty Affairs Handbook and On Campus: The Undergraduate Co-Curricular Affairs Handbook and is available to all members of the university community. The policy represents a core value of the university and all members of the university community are responsible for abiding by its tenets. Lack of knowledge of this policy is not an acceptable defense to any charge of academic dishonesty. All members of the academic community -- students, faculty, and staff -- are expected to report violations of these standards of academic conduct to the appropriate authorities. The procedures for such reporting are on file in the offices of the deans of each college, the office of the dean of students, and the office of the provost.” (Faculty Affairs Handbook section 409 http://www2.gsu.edu/~wwwfhb/sec409.html and GSU Undergraduate Catalogue section 1380 http://www2.gsu.edu/~catalogs/2010-2011/undergraduate/1300/1380_academic_honesty.htm) University, School, and Department policies require that I inform you that plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty will result in a grade of “F” on the assignment and likely in the course as well. You should be aware that academic dishonesty may also result in your dismissal from the University.

The policy will be strictly enforced, particularly as it relates to plagiarism and related concerns. I take academic honesty very seriously, so any cases of dishonesty will result in an automatic F grade and will be reported to the university.

Policy on Laptops and Cellular phones
Students are not allowed to use cell phones during class. Any student using a cell phone during class will be asked to leave the room. Laptops may be used for taking notes and researching relevant PMAP 4051 topics. All other laptop use during class is not permitted.

Voluntary Withdrawal
After the last day to add/drop a course, students may "withdraw" from a course when they decide to stop attending. Withdrawing from a course prior to the midpoint of the term makes the student eligible for a grade of W if the withdrawal limit has not been exceeded. This grade is reflected on the student's official record. After midpoint the student will receive the grade the instructor assigns. The last day to withdraw with a W or WF is March 1.

Course Evaluation
Your constructive assessment of this course plays an indispensable role in shaping education at Georgia State University. Upon completing the course, please take the time to fill out the online course evaluation.
## Tentative Course Schedule and Assignments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Due</th>
<th>Readings</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>13-Jan</td>
<td>Course Overview and Introductions</td>
<td>Plagiarism Quiz</td>
<td>Rossi 1 and 12; Babbie 4 and 12</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>An Overview of Program Evaluation</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Form Groups</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>20-Jan</td>
<td>Tailoring Evaluations / Identifying Issues and Formulating Questions</td>
<td>Final Project Part I due</td>
<td>Rossi 2 and 3; Babbie 5 and 17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>27-Jan</td>
<td>Assessing the Need for a Program / Expressing and Assessing Program Theory</td>
<td>Final Project Parts II and III due</td>
<td>Rossi 4 and 5</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>3-Feb</td>
<td>Assessing and Monitoring Program Process / Measuring and Monitoring Program Outcomes</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>10-Feb</td>
<td>The Structuring of Inquiry</td>
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<td>Babbie 6-8</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>17-Feb</td>
<td>Assessing Program Impact: Randomized Field Experiments</td>
<td>Finally Project Part IV due</td>
<td>Rossi 8</td>
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<td><strong>Midterm Exam</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Feb 28 Brightspace</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Midpoint March 1</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Last Day to Withdraw</strong></td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>24-Feb</td>
<td>Assessing Program Impact</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>1-Mar</td>
<td>The Structuring of Inquiry</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>2-Mar</td>
<td>No Class Group Project Work</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>9-Mar</td>
<td>No Class Spring Break</td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>16-Mar</td>
<td>Assessing Program Impact</td>
<td></td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>23-Mar</td>
<td>Detecting, Interpreting, and Analyzing Program Effects</td>
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<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>30-Mar</td>
<td>Political Environment of Policy Evaluation</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>6-Apr</td>
<td>Measuring Efficiency</td>
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<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>13-Apr</td>
<td>Final Project Part VI due</td>
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<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>1-Mar</td>
<td>Final Requirement Period</td>
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<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>27-Apr</td>
<td>Final Requirement Period</td>
<td></td>
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Quizzes
As assigned each student will take a quiz over the assigned readings through Brightspace or in-class (written and/or oral). The online quizzes are strictly timed.

Midterm Exam
There will be a midterm exam on February 24 covering the class materials to date. Instructions to follow.

Final Group Project Paper and Presentation
This course is designed with an application component in mind. In order to demonstrate your understanding of the course materials, you and your group will be required to develop a proposal to evaluate a specific current policy program of interest and relevance to you. The design will be drafted over the period of the semester one section at a time, with each section submitted, reviewed by the instructor, and returned to the group for revision. Each student will be responsible for at least one of the sections listed below. Please apprise me of which section(s) belongs to whom.

The required segments and their due dates are:
1. An introduction to the research proposal including a description of the program and the anticipated purpose of the evaluation in the form of a research question. January 27.
3. Definition of the program goals in the context of a program logic model. February 10.
5. Explanation of the evaluation research design (data-collection method, selection of subjects, ethical issues, techniques of control and comparison, etc.). March 9.

The final paper will consist of these segments, in revised form. The conclusion should discuss the strengths and weaknesses of the design, the potential for utilization of the findings, and implications for policy if the full evaluation were conducted. Students are not expected to conduct or complete a full program evaluation as part of this assignment. The final paper will be due Wednesday, April 20 by noon in the Brightspace Dropbox, and groups will present their designs in the last class session, on April 20.

Each group is responsible for preparing a PowerPoint slideshow to share their proposal with the class. Each student in the group will be evaluated on their clarity of communication, their level of professionalism and the quality of the slideshow. All members must be present for the presentation. The final presentation PowerPoint must be submitted in the Brightspace Dropbox by noon on April 20.
Program Evaluation Resources
Scholarly Journals on Program Evaluation
  American Journal of Evaluation
  Evaluation
  Evaluation & Health Professions
  Evaluation & Program Planning
  Evaluation Review
  New Directions for Evaluation
  Practical Assessment, Research on Evaluation (Open Access)
  Journal of Multidisciplinary Evaluation (Open Access)
  Journal of Policy Analysis and Management
  Advances in Program Evaluation
  Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis

American Evaluation Association
Association for Public Policy Analysis and Management

This syllabus is only a suggested course outline and is subject to change.