

**THE UNIVERSITY OF NEW MEXICO**  
**School of Public Administration**

**PA 522, Summer 2013—Program Evaluation**

**Dr. Mario A. Rivera, Regents' Professor of Public Administration**

Class Meetings: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 7-9:15 p.m., Woodward Hall 149

Office: Social Sciences Building, #3007

Tel. 277-3560; Fax 277-2529; e-mail [marivera@unm.edu](mailto:marivera@unm.edu)

Class webpage: [www.unm.edu/~marivera](http://www.unm.edu/~marivera)

Summer office hours: By appointment

**Scope and Purpose of the Course:**

This course is intended to provide an advanced introduction to the theory and practice of program evaluation, along with policy analysis and evaluation, as well as performance measurement. These forms of practice are usually treated separately in the literature and in the classroom but often need to be addressed by practitioners integrally, in their interrelationship in applied contexts.

To address the gap between theory and practice, program evaluation, along with policy analysis and performance accountability, are topics to be examined with concrete examples using case studies, and topics to be considered in their interrelation: (1) in networked and collaborative governance frameworks, and (2) in substantive areas that range across public education, public health, public welfare and social services, public information and education media campaigns, and other types or categories of policies and programs. There will be thorough consideration of every stage of program evaluation, from evaluation planning and design to process and impact evaluations.

The course will therefore aim to equip students to undertake program evaluation, as well as related performance assessment, and to do so strategically, in ways that are methodologically sound. There will be clear delineation of performance measurement and program evaluation, with consideration of how these two evaluative approaches may complement and inform one another, as well as clear distinctions drawn among various types of evaluation (design-phase, formative, summative, goal-oriented, fidelity-focused, theory-based, etc.). Functioning as a seminar, the course will draw on the practitioner experience of both instructor and students. It is intended to help students develop critical-analytical skills and mastery of methodological tools, consistent with *best practices* in the discipline. It also aims to strengthen research, writing, and communication skills in contexts of program evaluation.

***In addition to web-posted case studies and readings (including a resource folder entitled “Actual Evaluation Reports, Plans, and Forms”), there are two required texts, which will be read in their entirety; they are available from the UNM Bookstore and from online sources:***

1. Practical Program Evaluation: Assessing and Improving Planning, Implementation, and Effectiveness, by Huey-Tsyh Chen, Paperback, 2005, Sage Publications, ISBN 9780761902331
2. A Practical Guide to Program Evaluation Planning, by Debra J. Holden & Marc A. Zimmerman, 2008, Paperback, Sage Publications, ISBN 9781412967754

**Important Note:** Anyone requiring special accommodation or assistive technology is asked to advise Dr. Rivera within the first two weeks of class, so that reasonable accommodation may be provided. The School of Public Administration is committed to providing all necessary and feasible accommodation to students with disabilities so that they may fully participate in and contribute to their classes. Confidentiality will be maintained as indicated by the student's circumstances.

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**Course Requirements—Sources of and criteria for the final course grade:**

There are three main sources of evaluation in determining final course grade: a case summary and analysis paper based on one of two case studies for which the student has participated in class presentations; and each of two case presentations. General class participation will also be weighed, albeit less heavily, particularly in grade borderline cases. The paper will count for 40 percent of the final grade, and the presentations for 30 percent of the final grade each. Finally, the quality of each individual student's general class participation and general contribution will be counted in two ways. Case presentations are the principal way in which class participation is organized in the class. Contributions to class discussion will be considered if they augment or improve the participation grade represented by the two grades earned for case presentations. Not only will consistently positive contributions to class discussion make for the better grade in grade borderline situations, they will also be determinative of A and A+ grades.

***The written assignment is as follows:***

**(1) Written Assignment:** One case summary and analysis paper of approximately 12-15 pages length (typed, double-spaced, in Times New Roman 12-size font). The paper will provide a selective summary and critical analysis of one of the two cases the student helped present. It is the student's choice as to which of the two cases to summarize and analyze in the paper. This paper assignment will be explained in detail in class, and sample papers are posted to the class webpage. The paper must integrate (i.e., make consistent reference to) pertinent course readings. It is not to be a research paper, but rather an essay that builds explicitly on the case itself, germane course readings, and class lectures.

If outside research or other material is incorporated in the paper, it must constitute no more than half of the paper. The paper must directly and explicitly address and integrate course readings and case material. Any paper submission (initial submissions or final versions) with excessive grammatical or other expository errors or problems will be returned without comments, without a grade, and counted late when resubmitted in acceptable form. "Excessive errors" is taken to mean four or five spelling or other grammatical or expository writing problems, in Dr. Rivera's judgment and at his discretion.

The paper is expected, at minimum, to meet the standard of professional papers in practitioner contexts. If outside research is incorporated in the paper, all sources must be acknowledged, and cited using the American Psychological Association (APA) citation style—this is the citation style required for School of Public Administration professional papers. A brief, free guide to APA citation may be accessed at the following URL: <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01>. If the hyperlink does not work, cut and paste the URL to your web browser—this webpage, from Purdue University, is regularly updated).

Acknowledgement of sources is essential, in order to avoid plagiarism. *Plagiarism, defined as presenting someone else's work as one's own, may result in failure in the paper assignment and may also eventuate in failure in the course. If referred to the University Dean of Students, it may also eventuate in other disciplinary action including suspension or expulsion from the Public Administration program, or from the University. This is consistent with the University's student code of conduct as well as University and School of Public Administration policy.*

A case summary and analysis paper cannot have more than half of its material in common with the paper submitted any of the case presentation partners. While its case summary materials may find some commonality among presenters (though never in word-for-word writing), the analysis part of the paper (half or more of the paper) must be distinctly the individual student's preparing the assignment. Papers should be submitted within two weeks of a case presentation, although this is a flexible rather than absolute deadline. All papers and revisions must be submitted electronically no later than the beginning of the final class session. The provision for revising papers is explained below.

*Important paper submission requirements:* It is stressed that papers failing to meet all of the following submission requirements may not be opened or graded, and those papers submitted in some other way will not count as submitted on time. **The paper must be submitted electronically in any version of Microsoft Word (Word), to *marivera@unm.edu*, as attachments to an email with "522" in the subject line.** Any papers submitted without the 522 identifier on the subject line will not be readily retrieved and are therefore likely not to be evaluated. Sample case summary/analyses, other sample papers, and other resources for presentations and papers are available on the class webpage.

*Additional options:*

1. A student with a propaper or other final project topic in mind may do a literature search and literature review of 12-15 pages in lieu of—in the place of—the case summary and analysis. Such an effort would need to incorporate readings and themes from this course, and it would require discussion with and approval by Dr. Rivera.
2. In the event that a student is not satisfied with the grade outcome of a revised paper, she or he may submit a case summary and analysis of the other case she or he presented. The grade for that alternative paper would replace that of the first if it improves the student's grade. This option will be explained further in class. Such a compensating assignment needs to be discussed with and approved by Dr. Rivera, and submitted by the final class period, as with other paper submissions.

*Paper revisions:* The paper may be submitted once based on the instructor's comments on the first submission, as indicated in the reading and assignment schedule below. This first paper submittal is to be proofread, clean, and in final form—***it is not considered a draft***. The paper may be revised, rewritten, and resubmitted once (based on instructor comments on the first submission) by the final class period, for reconsideration of the grade. Papers submitted within a week of the final class meeting will not provide enough time for revisions, so all first submissions must be in no later than Friday July 12, in order to have time for revision and resubmission. All first submissions and resubmissions are to be done electronically as stipulated in the syllabus, in MS Word, to

[marivera@unm.edu](mailto:marivera@unm.edu), with “522” on the subject line. No other format is acceptable, including PDF and zipped files. The paper revision option will be explained further in class.

Students wishing to use the extra time may simply submit their papers by the beginning of the last class period. Papers submitted for the first time after July 12 and up to the last class period will be considered to be submitted on time—there simply will not be an opportunity for revision of these papers.

In the event that a student is not satisfied with the grade outcome of a revised paper, she or he may submit a case summary and analysis of the other case she or he presented. The grade for that alternative paper would replace that of the first if it improves the student’s grade. All such compensating assignments must be discussed with and approved by Dr. Rivera.

**(2) Case presentations**—As already indicated, every student will participate in co-leading two case presentations with group partners. *The case presentation grade will be based on the quality of each individual’s presentation of his/her part of the group case presentation—it is not a “group” grade.* Additionally, each group is to electronically submit its presentation materials (usually a PowerPoint file) within a week of the presentation. Each section of the presentation presented by individual students should be tagged with the student-author’s name.

**(3) Class participation**—General contribution to class discussion and to the quality of the class experience will also constitute this portion of the final grade, along with consideration of the quality of case presentations. *The entirety or totality of the student’s participation and contribution will be weighed, therefore, in arriving at the class participation grade. Consistent class attendance is presupposed for an excellent grade in class participation. Any more than three unexcused absences will result in a substantially lower class participation grade, and hence a lower course grade.*

No one will receive an A grade (A+, A, or A-) without consistent attendance, consistent participation, and consistent, positive contribution to class discussion, in the way of quality presentations and readings-based general comments during class. In this context, it should be stressed that disruption of class discussion in any form is unacceptable, as detailed in the “Safe Space” policy that follows.

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**“Safe Space” policy—ground rules for a positive classroom environment and experience**

All classroom discourse will exhibit respect for all other persons, not only within the confines of the classroom but also in general. There will no denigration of anyone in any context (including in relation to case materials or readings, videos, or any other point of reference), on account of race, ethnicity, gender, disability status, sexual orientation, religion, or political perspective.

Explicit statement of this policy is necessary to ensure that everyone feels comfortable and free to articulate ideas or viewpoints. Class discussion allows for disagreement; however, comments must be sustained by evidence, in particular evidence from class materials and readings. Class comments are not to be unsupported assertions of opinion, and never *ad hominem* (personal) attacks. Incivility or rudeness of any kind is unacceptable. This includes carrying on conversations during class, checking cell phones or other electronic devices for messages, texting, and other distractions. Such distractions will result in a correspondingly low or failing grade in class participation for that day.

Breaches of this policy may result in administrative sanctions, including administrative drop of a student from the course, and/or referral of the student to the University judicial system. The instructor will not be interrupting class to correct or call attention to these kinds of behavior unless it is necessary for the continued conduct of the class. No other notification of students will be required for any of these sanctions to be taken up.

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***Preparing for case study discussion:*** It is up to each group presenting the given case what themes to develop most prominently. In every instance, cases are to be developed and presented in relation to assigned course readings. Every student is expected to read every case study, whether or not s/he is assigned to its presentation, as well as ancillary assigned readings, so as to inform his or her class comments on the case. *Readings-based comments in class are by far the likeliest to earn an A grade in general class participation.*

***Additional remarks on grading policy:*** The provision for one revision of the course paper is intended to allow each student to maximize his or her control over the eventual grade, while maintaining academic rigor. All work, including class discussion, is expected to be consistent with the nature of graduate professional study: original, supported by readings and evidence, and in general knowledge-based, incisive, and rigorous.

Plagiarism (presenting another's work as one's own) will result in failure for that assignment and, at the instructor's discretion, may also result in failure in the course and referral to the University Judicial system. The University code of conduct is available on the [unm.edu](http://unm.edu) University webpage.

It is expected that students will also draw on their practitioner or other experience with organizations when pertinent. However, readings-based argumentation in papers and comments in class are the most reliably positive manner of contribution to the class.

An A+ is reserved for truly superb work; A is excellent work; A- is outstanding work, but not quite of the level of excellence of an A; B and B+ represent good, sound work and are still honor grades. Grades of B- and below mean that some portion of the basic, core concepts are missing, poorly understood, or poorly expressed in verbal or written articulation of ideas and analysis.

The very best written-analysis and verbal-presentation work is accurate, evidence-based, clear, and creative, and of well-sustained, consistently high quality. Expository and analytical quality for written work includes a well-organized paper or essay, paragraphs that correspond to separate topics and subtopics, cogent sentences with appropriate use of adjectives and adverbs, correct syntax, and other basic elements of grammatical, effective writing. Essential in this connection is concise, compelling, clear argumentation and analysis. Written work in every instance should draw on the case study under examination and the two course texts, as well as class lectures.

Correct grammar and spelling. Remember that the spell-checker function cannot distinguish, for instance, between *their*, *there*, and *they're*, or between *discrete* and *discreet*. Reread and edit your work (at least twice, preferably half a dozen times) before you hand it in. Your paper submission is *not a draft*, even when submitted for comments and possible revision. It is to be a closely edited,

corrected paper that is as well executed with reference to these criteria as you can make it. As indicated previously, papers with excessive spelling and grammar, and expository writing quality and clarity, problems, will be returned without a grade. When resubmitted, such a paper shall be considered late and graded as much as one grade lower in consequence.

*Requests for grade clarification or reconsideration:* Grade evaluation is always done with care, rigor, and thoroughness, aiming for fairness and for an assessment that reflects the quality of a student's work. Questions about the grade received in any given assignment, or for the course as a final grade, must be raised in a timely manner, within one week of return of the assignment and (for the final grade) *within one week of the web-posting of the grade by the University Registrar.*

Any explanation of a grade or grades will be provided only in a one-on-one meeting with the student—grade discussions are by privacy-protected and confidential and may only be carried out with the individual student involved. Requests for grade reconsideration, or protests of final grades, will, at Dr. Rivera's discretion, initiate a total reconsideration of the evaluation involved, so that *such a request could result in a grade being raised, lowered, or kept the same.*

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*This syllabus may be amended, augmented, or revised (for instance, with additional readings, revised class schedule, or modification of course requirements) even after web-posting as a final syllabus.*

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**Reading and assignment schedule; by class # and Tuesday date:**

1. & 2.—6/4 and 6/6. **Introduction to the course and to the subdiscipline of program evaluation;** discussion of the interrelation between performance measurement and program evaluation. Discussion of the case method, of case presentation options, and the assignment of cases.
3. 6/11. **Overview of Program Evaluation. Collaborative evaluation. Evaluation and case study.** Read “Program Evaluation & Case Study,” “Collaborative Program Evaluation in Local Government: A Case Study,” “Theoretical Underpinnings of Practical Participatory Evaluation,” and “Participatory Evaluation in International Development” (all posted).
4. 6/13. **Overview of Program Evaluation Methods and Approaches..** Read “Logic Models in Telling Your Program's Performance Story,” “Network Approach to Evaluation,” and “Network Logic Model” (all in the 522 readings 2 folder).
5. 6/18. **The Program Theory Conceptual Framework; Evaluation Planning; Community-based Participatory Research**—Chen, “Bottom-up Approach to Integrative Validity” and Chen & Rossi, “Theory-driven Approach to Evaluation” (both in Chen readings folder).
6. 6/20. **Evaluation of Collaborative and Partnered Programs. Logic Models.** Read Chen, Introduction and Chapter 1. Also read “Innovation Diffusion, Network Features, and Cultural Communication Variables” (Mario Rivera & Everett M. Rogers), “Cross-functional Team in a National Laboratory: A Case Study (Mario Rivera & Max Valdez).”

7. 6/25. **The Program Theory Conceptual Framework; Theory-driven Evaluation**—Chen, Chapter 2, Holden Chapter 1, Introduction. *Presentation 1*, of posted case “Street-involved Youth Program in Vancouver.” Also read “Collaborative Evaluation for Community Change” and “the Fidelity-Adaptation Relationship in Evaluation” (posted).
8. 6/27. **Evaluation Overview; Evaluation Stages and Options; Evaluation Design**—Chen, Chapter 3 & 4, Holden Chapter 2, 3. “Evaluation Planning Here and Now.” *Presentation 2, Holden chapter 3 case presentation* (first case in Holden text), *Planning for an Education Evaluation*, by Julie Marshall. Also read “Role-sharing Between Evaluators and Stakeholders in Practice” (posted).
8. 7/2. **Stakeholder Involvement in Program Planning and Evaluation; Strategic Planning and Management**—Chen, Chapter 5, Holden Ch. 4, with text case #2, *Planning for a Service Program Evaluation*, by Mari Millery. *Presentation 3: chapter case presentation*. Also read “A Multidisciplinary Model of Evaluation Capacity Building” (readings folder 3).

**July 4 Holiday—no class meeting**

9. 7/9. **Design-phase and Early Implementation Evaluation; Formative Evaluation**—Chen, Chapter 6, Holden, Ch. 5—with text case #3, *Planning for a Community-Based Program Evaluation*, by Thomas Reischl and Susan Franzen. *Presentation 5: chapter case presentation*. Also read “Rapid Equity Focused Evaluation” (readings folder 3); recommended reading is “Retaining Clients in a Cohort Study” (readings folder 3).
10. 7/11. **Mature-Phase Program Implementation Evaluation; Summative Evaluation**—Chen, Chapter 7, Holden Ch. 6—with text case #4, *Planning for a Media Evaluation*, by W. Douglas Evans, Kevin Davis, and Matthew Farrelly. *Presentation 6: chapter case presentation*. Also read “Results-mapping Evaluation: A Case Study” (readings folder 4) and Chen, “Formal Theory versus Stakeholder Theory” (Chen readings folder).
11. 7/16. **Program Monitoring; Program Monitoring Systems; Performance Measurement, and Organizational Accountability**—Chen, Chapter 8, Holden Ch. 7, “Program Evaluation Planning: Overview and Analysis,” Zimmerman and Holden. *Presentation 7: presentation of posted case “HIV/AIDS in Thailand.”* Also read “Impact Pathways Analysis in International Evaluation;” recommended reading is “Advocacy and Evaluation in International Aid Programs (both in readings folder 4).
12. 7/18. **Efficacy versus Effectiveness Evaluation in Outcomes Assessment**—Chen, Chapter 9. *Presentation 8: presentation of posted case “Team Read.”* Also read “Literacy Coaching and School Social Resources” and “Evaluation Capacity-building: Administrator & Teacher Perspectives” (readings folder 4).
13. 7/23. **Theory-driven Outcome Evaluation**—Chen, Chapter 10 & 11. *Presentation 9: presentation of posted case “RAND CYSA & TANF program evaluation in California.”* Also read Chen, “Theory-driven Evaluation Perspective” (Chen readings folder).

15. 7/25. **Politics and roles in Program Evaluation; professional judgment in program evaluation and performance management.**

Final class session:

**Selective review of the course.** Discuss Chen Chapter 11, as well “Evaluating Networks” (Sydow) and “A Transaction Cost-Based Approach to Partnership Performance Evaluation” (both in readings folder 6). *All papers (either first submissions or revisions) are due no later than the beginning of this final class period; earlier submissions are encouraged, as stipulated under course requirements above.*

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