Program Evaluation
Course Syllabus

I.   Introduction
A. Purpose

The purpose of this course is to present students with an overview of basic approaches used to understand and assess public programs. All public programs, however clearly stated, have goals and serve citizens, clients, or recipients. Program evaluation aims to determine whether public programs achieve their intended goals or make a contribution to those they serve and how to improve their effectiveness. As an academic practice program evaluation contributes to social science research as well by testing ideas and generating knowledge. Moreover, there are a number of different ways to assess the extent to which programs are being carried out, operating, achieving goals, and producing desirable changes and benefits. This course is a detailed introduction to the models, methods, and practices that are used to study the performance of public programs; that is, ongoing, publically funded, and executed activities that are intended to carry out legislatively adopted public policies as distinct from educational, medical, business evaluation. The course will look at public program evaluation from a conceptual and analytical point of view and review the numerous ways of understanding and assessing program effectiveness. In addition, the course will be guided by a humanistic viewpoint that recognizes that evaluations examine programs and take place in organizations that are run by human beings. The ability to interact effectively with these human beings will have a substantial effect on the ultimate ability of an evaluation to improve a program.

II.   Readings and Other Course Materials
A. Texts

There are three required texts for the course. The required texts have been ordered for purchase at the UNM bookstore. Also, they may be purchased on-line from the publisher or another source. In addition, two of the three required texts are available for electronic purchase and use at CourseSmart, a digital textbook service.

▪   Required Texts

P. H Rossi, M. W. Lipsey, & H. E. Freeman, (2004). **Evaluation: A Systematic Approach** (7th Ed.), Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage

- CourseSmart http://www.coursesmart.com/evaluation-a-systematic-approach-seventh/peter-h-rossi/dp/9780761908944

Ronald D. Sylvia, Kathleen M. Sylvia, (2008). **Evaluation and Program Planning,** (4th Ed.). Oak Grove, ILL: Waveland Press

- CourseSmart http://www.coursesmart.com/IR/2103271/9781577667780?__hdv=6.8

James C. McDavid, Irene Huse, Laura R.L. Hawthorn, (2013) **Program Evaluation and Performance Measurement** (2nd Ed), Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage

- CourseSmart http://www.coursesmart.com/IR/2103271/9781412978316?__hdv=6.8

- **Other Readings and Materials**
  - **Journal Articles**

Students will be expected to read a number of articles from academic journals as part of their course work. These readings will be necessary to complete course assignments. All assigned articles are available on-line in in full-text, PDF files as part of the UNM Learn course website in a folder in the corresponding course module. Also they are available through the UNM library http://library.unm.edu/ in full-text, PDF files. Students may choose to download these articles or read them on-line. Full citations for these articles are included in the course schedule below under Readings.

  - **Slides**

Microsoft Power Point Slides will be posted for all topics on the UNM Learn course site https://learn.unm.edu/ . These slides will cover some of the assigned reading, provide considerable additional information relevant to the particular topic not found in the reading, and will present any assignments that are to be completed by students. Students are expected to review these slides and understand the content in them for application to and completion of course assignments.

III.   **Activities and Assignments**
    A. **Concept Acquisition and Application Activities**

Students will be expected to review all posted material and participate in class activities using the UNM Learn course site https://learn.unm.edu/. As indicated in the course schedule below, activities are divided into "acquisition activities" which are aimed at helping students acquire concepts from the Slides, Readings, and other posted audio and video explications, and "application activities" or exercises which endeavor to have the student apply the concepts covered to instances and cases both for practice and feedback as well as for submission as assigned coursework.   These course activities may be supplemented by others, but initially they will consist in the following:

- **Slide Review** – as indicated above, slides will be posted with additional information on topics for students to review
- **Audio-Video Viewing** – to help explain important topics and show and provide practice for the application of concepts, short video clips or audio with picture clips may be posted for students to view
- **Discussion Questions** – as indicated above, the instructor will post questions on the course discussion board for students to respond as well as offer comments on the responses of others
- **Group Assignments** – both as concept acquisition and concept application practice as well as building the important skill of working on evaluation in teams students will complete short assignments in assigned groups and will post them for presentation to and feedback from the instructor and other students
- **Individual Assignments** – as indicated below, students will complete and post individual assignments and the instructor will assign points and provide feedback to students individually

    B. **Assignments**

There will be no graded tests. Students are asked to take an ungraded pre-test at the course's beginning and an ungraded post-test at the courses end. The pre and post-tests are for comparison purposes so that students can evaluate their knowledge gains during the life of the course. For a grade, students will complete four individual assignments, three group exercises and eight on-line class discussions. These will be completed in the order indicated on the course schedule below (extensions to submit

assignments will not be granted, but students may turn in assignments after they are due and should expect a deduction of points for lateness; discussion must be completed in the time they are open for posting). No extra credit or make-up assignments will be given. Each assignment will be further explained in instructions posted on-line. All assignments will be posted to the UNM Learn site for the course. Class discussions will be take place on the UNM Learn site in response to instructor-posted questions and will be completed by each student posting responses and comments to the website. Brief explanations of the assignments and *important comments* on how to complete them successfully *follow*:

- **Discussions** (10 points x 8 = 80 points; as assigned on schedule)

Each student is expected to participate fully and enthusiastically in the on-line Discussions outlined above. This will be accomplished by first posting a response to a Discussion question posed on-line on the discussion board by the instructor and then commenting on the postings and comments of other students in a virtual Discussion. The purpose of the Discussions is for students *to demonstrate their understanding of key concepts* in these on-line forums and to get feedback from and help other students understand them as well. Each Discussions will have a limited period for posting responses and comments: opening and closing dates and times will be included in each Discussion's instructions.

For each discussion, students will be expected to post an initial response that will be worth a maximum of six (6) points. This initial response must 1.) *Directly answer the question posted*; 2.) *Show knowledge of the assigned material found in the slides*, readings and other posted materials; 3.) *Provided examples of points being made.*

After the initial posting students are expected to post *a minimum* of two (2) additional comments on the postings of other students worth two (2) points each. These comments must *1.) Be supported by reference to posted course materials and readings*; 2.) *Be critical (agreement or disagreement) and fully explain why using posted course materials and readings*. The keys to successful discussion postings are:

1.) Do not wait until close to the time that a discussion closes to make an initial posting
2.) Fully address the discussion question in the initial posting
3.) Write clearly and precisely in both postings and comments
4.) Be specific and clear and use examples
5.) Make reference to course materials and readings (without citation or quotation)
6.) Apply, explain, and show knowledge of course materials and readings
7.) Do not express personal opinions or feelings about the postings of others in comments
8.) Support all comments with course materials and readings (without citation or quotation)

The six (6) points for the initial post and the two (2) points for each comment result in a total of ten (10) possible points for each discussion. A rubric will be used in grading to indicate the desirable features of good quality responses and comments.

- **Individual Assignments** (25 points x 4 = 100 points; due as assigned on schedule)

A set of key abilities that must be developed in both public administration and program evaluation is the understanding of program purposes and the measurement of how well those purposes are being achieved. To help develop these abilities, students are expected to complete individual assignments and submit them to through UNM Learn to the instructor for grading. The keys to successful completion of individual assignments are:

1.) Follow the assignment instructions
2.) Answer any assignment questions and carry out required tasks
3.) Use any provided materials and frameworks to submit assignments
4.) Fully develop responses and write clearly, concisely, and grammatically
5.) Apply course materials to complete assignments
6.) Submit assignments on-time

Students will complete four (4) assignments individually applying concepts from posted materials to short cases and projects worth twenty-five (25) points each for a total of one hundred (100) points. Each student is expected to develop their own work, but may consult with the instructor, other students, or their group members if desired. The four (4) individual assignments are:

1. Program Goals and Objectives
2. Evaluation Research Questions
3. Data Collection Plan
4. Data Analysis Plan

- **Group Assignments** (10 points x 3 = 30 points; due as assigned on schedule)

One key capacity in both public administration and in evaluation is the ability to work in teams. To help develop this capacity, students will be assigned groups and must work in them to complete the group assignments. Group members will be able to communicate asynchronously using course messaging and in real time using the chat, discussion, and other conferencing tools built into the UNM Learn site software. In addition, students should collaborate through the site will be able to post their work there. The keys to successful group work are:

1.) Make sure to communicate in a timely way with all of the group members
2.) Copy all group members on items of general interest or collaboration
3.) Make sure to use the UNM Learn group site for communication and for developing materials
4.) Divide the work into smaller tasks and assign them to individuals or teams
5.) Rotate the group leadership, if desirable
6.) Set time frames for completion of tasks that allow time for review of a final product by all
7.) Let the instructor know, if members are not participating
8.) Make oneself available during the time group assignments are open as one would in any class

Groups will complete four (3) assignments applying class concepts to a short project worth ten (10) points each for a total for forty (30) points. Each student is expected to participate fully in activities and group work. After discussion with the instructor and at the instructor's discretion, *students not participating in group assignments may have up to ten (10) points deducted from their total score*. The three (3) group assignments are:

1. Social System Assessment
2. Program Logic Development
3. Assessing Flawed Designs

- **On-Line Course Evaluation** (2 points)

At the end of the course, students are given an opportunity to evaluate the course on-line by Learn as indicated on the Syllabus. Given that this is a course in evaluation, students are _expected to complete this evaluation_ and will receive _two (2) points_ for doing so. Each student should receive an email indicating when the evaluation is available on-line and _must send a course message to the instructor after completing it in order to receive the two (2) points credit_.

IV.   Grading

Points earned for completing course requirements will provide the basis for course grades. The value of each requirement is detailed above. Grades will be assigned on the basis of cumulative points earned. A grading scale is presented below. It presents the grades earned for levels of accumulated points.

Grading Scale

Grade	Points
A+	210
A	209-200
A-	199-190
B+	189-180
B	179-170
B-	169-160
C+	159-150
C	149-140
etc.	

V.   Course Communications

Course communications will take place in three main ways. First, through postings to the UNM Learn course site. Second, communications are handled through the Course Messaging function available as part of the UNM Learn site. _Therefore, students should closely monitor the course web page and the course messages for updates, changes, and information_. Third, communication can occur through teleconferences or appointment consultations arranged with the instructor. Students are encouraged to phone the instructor at any time, but are _reminded that to leave a message with call back information_.

VI.   Incomplete Grades

The grade of Incomplete MUST be requested in writing (electronic mail is acceptable) from the instructor. The grade of incomplete will not be assigned unless so requested. The request must state a reason appropriate to the UNM Office of Graduate Studies guidelines for incomplete grades. According to these guidelines…"the grade of "I" is given only when circumstances beyond the student's control have prevented completion of the course work within the official dates of a session."

VII.   Plagiarism

The policy on plagiarism in this class follows the definitions used in the UNM Faculty Handbook. Plagiarism is the appropriation of another person's ideas, processes, results or words without giving appropriate credit. It is done intentionally. Ideas and quotations from others must be cited

appropriately. This includes all sources even the author's own work used elsewhere. Such work in the course will not be accepted to complete any assignment/

VIII.   Additional Notes

In an effort to meet obligations under Title IX, UNM faculty, Teaching Assistants, and Graduate Assistants are considered "responsible employees" by the Department of Education (see pg. 15 - http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/qa-201404-title-ix.pdf).   This designation requires that any report of gender discrimination which includes sexual harassment, sexual misconduct and sexual violence made to a faculty member, TA, or GA must be reported to the Title IX Coordinator at the Office of Equal Opportunity (oeo.unm.edu). For more information on the campus policy regarding sexual misconduct, see: https://policy.unm.edu/university-policies/2000/2740.html

IX. Course Schedule

MODULE 1 INTRODUCTION TO PROGRAM EVALUATION	Aug. 22 – Sept. 11		
TOPICS	**ACQUISITION ACTIVITIES**	**APPLICATION PRACTICE ACTIVITIES**	**READING**
Topic 1: Course Introduction	Aug. 22 – 28		
• Syllabus and Requirements • Course Organization	• Review Intro Slides • Discussion: Introductions	• Pre Test – *Closes Aug. 30*	
Topic 2: Programs in the Public Sector	Aug. 29 – Sept. 11		

• Centrality of Public Programs
  o Definitions of Programs
  o Characteristics of Program Evaluation
• Purpose and Practice of Program Evaluation
  o Evaluation and Evaluation Research
  o Role of the Evaluator
	• Review Program Slides
	• Discussion: Programs and Program Evaluation
			• Rossi, Lipsey and Freeman, pages 3-28; 369-419
			• Sylvia and Sylvia, pages 118-19
			• McDavid and Hawthorn, pages 15-34; 401-429
			• Modarresi, Newman & Abolafia, Academic evaluators versus practitioners: alternative experiences of professionalism, Program Planning & Evaluation 24 (2001) 1-11
			• Lewis & Zarb, Federal Program Evaluation from the OMB Perspective Public Administration Review, Vol. 34, No. 4 (Jul. - Aug., 1974), pp. 308-317
			• Poland, Program Evaluation and Administrative Theory Public Administration Review, 34 (4) 1974 333-338
			• Davis, Do You Want a Performance Audit or a Program Evaluation? Public Administration Review, 50 (1) 1990 35-41

MODULE 2 UNDERSTANDING PROGRAM PURPOSE & CONTEXT	Sept. 12 – Oct. 9		
TOPICS	**ACQUISITION ACTIVITIES**	**APPLICATION PRACTICE ACTIVITIES**	**READING**
Topic 3: Program Background and Aims	Sept. 12 – 18		

•   Identifying Stakeholders
  o Engaging the Stakeholders
  o Stakeholder Participation and Communication
•   Goals & Objectives
	• View Writing G&O Practice
	• Discussion: Stakeholders
		• Individual Assignment 1: Writing Goals & Objectives – *Due Sept. 20*	• Rossi, Lipsey and Freeman, pages 41-44; 48-52
			• Sylvia and Sylvia, pages 31-32; 38-41; 121-127
			• Jung, Developing and Validating New Concepts and Measures of Program Goal Ambiguity Administration & Society 44(6) 2012 675 –701
			• Geist, Using the Delphi method to engage stakeholders-A comparison of two studies, Evaluation & Program Planning 33 (2010) 147–154
			• Bryson, Patton & Quinn Working with evaluation stakeholders-A rationale, step-wise approach and toolkit, Evaluation & Program Planning 34 (2011) 1–12
			• Khakee, Reading Plans as an Exercise in Evaluation, Evaluation 6 (2) 2000 119–136

Topic 4: Programs in the Social Context	Sept. 19 – 25		

• Social Systems Concepts
  o Purpose and General Systems Concepts
  o Task and Social Environments of Programs
• Programs as Social Change Entities
  o Need Analysis
  o Program Service Analysis
• Flow Charting Social Environment
	• Review Social System Slides
	• View Social System Practice
	• Discussion: Social Systems
		• Group Assignment 1: Social System Assessment – *Due Oct. 4*	• Rossi, Lipsey and Freeman, pages 54-55; 101-130
			• Sylvia and Sylvia, pages 3-23
			• McDavid and Hawthorn, pages 39-69; 201-229
			• Bridgeforth, Toward a General Theory of Social Systems, Int'l. Journal of Sociology and Social Policy 25 (10-11) 2005 54-81
			• Johnson, Applying Social Capital Theory to Needs Assessment, Administrative Theory & Praxis, 21 (1) 1999: 12-21

Topic 5: Programs in the Production Context	Sept. 26 – Oct. 2		

• Programs as Productive Operating Entities
  o Production Systems Concepts
  o Processes and Capacity
• Flow Charting Production and Problems
	• Review Operating Slides
	• View Flow Charting
	• Discussion: Capacity
			• Rossi, Lipsey and Freeman, pages 169-199
			• Sylvia and Sylvia, pages 56-74
			• McDavid and Hawthorn, pages 281-302
			• Brown Enhancing and Measuring Organizational Capacity Public Administration Review 76 (4) 2012504-515
			• Maher et al, Methodology Matters, Tropical Medicine & Int'l Health 17 (30) 2012 264–271
			• Bendoly, Donohue & Schultz, Behavior in Operations Management Journal of Operations Management 24 (2006) 737–752

Topic 6: Programs In the Action Context	Oct. 3 – Oct. 9		
• Programs as Parts of Ongoing Organizations • Evaluability Analysis	• Review Slides • Review Background Slides • Discussion: Evaluability		• Rossi, Lipsey and Freeman, pages 136-138; 331-366 • Sylvia and Sylvia, pages 75-89; 91-111 • McDavid and Hawthorn, pages 376-393 • Thurston & Potvin, Evaluability Assessment as a Tool for Incorporating Evaluation in Social Change Programs Evaluation 2003, 453-69

MODULE 3 FOCUSING THE PROGRAM EVALUATION	Oct. 17 – 30		
TOPICS	**ACQUISITION ACTIVITIES**	**APPLICATION PRACTICE ACTIVITIES**	**READING**
Topic 7: Program Logic	**Oct. 17 -23**		

• Program Theory
  o Cause and Effect Chain
  o Effects Logic
• Program Logic
  o Depicting the Cause and Effect Chain
	• Review Focus & Effects Slides
	• View Logic Model Practice
	• Discussion: Program Logic
		• Group Assignment 2: Program Theory and Logic – *Due Oct. 25*	• Rossi, Lipsey and Freeman, pages 93-96; 139-166; 301-317
			• Sylvia and Sylvia, pages 115-119
			• McDavid and Hawthorn, pages 39-69; 118-124
			• Byrne, Evaluating complex social interventions in a complex world Evaluation 19 (3) 2013 217-28
			• Hill & Thies, Program theory and logic model Evaluation & Program Planning 33 (2010) 356–364
			• Millar, Simeone & Carnevale, Logic models- a systems tool for performance management Evaluation & Program Planning 24 (2001) 73-81
			• Cobigo, Morin, Mercier, Logic Model for Behavior Disorder, Jo of Dev Disabilities 18 (1) 2012 87-95
			• Crane, Using Qualitative Data to Refine a Logic Model, Qualitative Report 15 (4) 2010 899-931

Topic 8: Program Research Design	**Oct. 24 – 30**		

• Selecting an Evaluation Approach and Type
• Developing Program Evaluation Questions
  o Evaluation Questions
  o Evaluation Questions, Concepts, and Constructs
	• Review Design & Measures Slides	• Individual Assignment 2: Project Upstream Evaluation Questions – *Due Nov. 1*	• Rossi, Lipsey and Freeman, pages 33-47; 67-97; 203-213
			• Sylvia and Sylvia, pages 125-130
			• McDavid and Hawthorn, pages 305-333
			• Oakley, Strange & Stephenson, Evaluating Processes, Evaluation Vol 10(4) 2004 440-62
			• Havens, Program Evaluation and Program Management Public Administration Review, 41 (4) 1981), 480-485
			• Schalock, Bonham & Verdugo, The conceptualization and measurement of quality of life, Evaluation & Program Planning 31 (2008) 181–190
			• Epstein & Klerman, When is a Program Ready for a Rigorous Impact Eval, the Role of a Logic Model, Evaluation Review 36 (5) 2013 75-401

MODULE 4 THINKING ABOUT PROGRAM EVALUATION DATA	Nov. 7 – Dec. 18		
TOPICS	**ACQUISITION ACTIVITIES**	**APPLICATION PRACTICE ACTIVITIES**	**READING**
Topic 9: Data Collection	**Nov. 7 – 13**		
• Turning Constructs into Measures • Developing Measures • Levels of Measurement • Sampling Considerations • Data Collection	• Review Collection Slides • Discussion: Measurement	• Individual Assignment 3: Data Collection Plan – *Due Nov. 15*	• Rossi, Lipsey and Freeman, pages 113-118 • McDavid and Hawthorn, pages 146-160 • Stipak, Citizen Satisfaction with Urban Services Potential Misuse as a Performance Indicator PAR 1979 Vol. 39, No. 1 (Jan. - Feb., 1979), pp. 46-52 • Coker & Friedel, The Data Collection Matrix Model, A Tool for Functional Area and Program Evaluation Research, 32, (1) 1991. 71-81 • Wellisch & Jordan, Sampling and Data Collection in Natl Nutrition, Am J Clin Nutr 40 1984 368-381 • Lichtenberger & Ogle, The Collection of Post-Release Outcome Data for the Evaluation of Correctional Education Programs Jo of Correctional Ed 57 (3) 2006 230-238
Topic 10: Data Analysis	**Nov. 14 – 20**		
• Quantitative Analysis • Qualitative Analysis	• Review Analysis Slides • Discussion: Data	• Individual Assignment 4: Data Analysis Plan – *Due Dec. 6*	• Rossi, Lipsey and Freeman, pages 233-236 • Sylvia and Sylvia, pages 168-170 • McDavid and Hawthorn, pages 129-145; 165-296 • Wistow & Byrne, Using Qualitative Comparative Analysis to understand complex policy problems Evaluation19 (2) 2013 126 –140 • USGAO, Quantitative Data Analysis 1992 • Strauss & Corbin, Grounded Theory Research Procedures, Canons, and Evaluative Criteria Qualitative Sociology 3 (1) 1999 2-21 • Corden & Sainsbury, Exploring Quality-Research Participants' Perspectives on Verbatim Quotations Int. Jo of Soc Res Methodology 9 (2) 2006 97-110 • Choi & Li, Qualitative case studies in operations management Trends, research outcomes Journal of Operations Management 29 (2011) 329–342

Topic 11: Threats to the Validity of Data	Nov. 21 – 27		
• Experimental & Quasi-Experimental Models • Strengthening Claims	• Review Threat Slides	• Group Assignment 3: Flawed Designs – *Due Dec. 6*	• Rossi, Lipsey and Freeman, pages 239-297 • Sylvia and Sylvia, pages 141-167 • McDavid and Hawthorn, pages 79-120 • LeBaron & Wallace, Design Down & Up An argument-based approach to validity in evaluation, Evaluation 17 (3) 2011-233-46
Topic 12: Data Use	Nov. 28 – Dec. 11		

• Reporting Evaluation Results
  o Improving Utilization
  o Dissemination and Reporting
• Course Evaluation
	• Review Reporting Slides	• Post Test – *Closes Dec. 18*	• Rossi, Lipsey and Freeman, pages 413-419
			• Neuman, et al, Evaluation Utilization Research, Evaluation & Program Planning 36 (2013) 64–70
			• Andrews, Start at the end: empowerment evaluation product planning, Evaluation & Program Planning 27 (2004) 275–285

Topic 13: Course Close	Dec. 12–18		
		• On-Line Course Evaluation	