

THE UNIVERSITY OF NEW MEXICO
School of Public Administration

PA 522, ITV, Summer Session 2015—Program Evaluation

Dr. Mario A. Rivera, Regents' Professor & Interim Director, School of Public Administration

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Class Meetings: Tuesdays and Thursdays 7-9:15 p.m., Studio Classroom in Dane Smith Hall 134

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Office hours: By appointment during Summer Session

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 and 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 settings.

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 both published case studies and actual cases from Dr. Rivera's evaluation practice in New Mexico (focused on Accelerate New Mexico Math Experience, but extending to other projects including Lovelace Science Academy, Native American Research Centers for Health, Three-tier Teacher Licensure, and Behavioral Health Privatization). Topics to be considered include public-private partnerships in networked collaborative systems, in substantive areas that range across K-12 and postsecondary developmental education, employability and workforce training, public health, welfare and social services, and social marketing media campaigns. There will be close review of every stage of evaluation, from evaluation planning and design to process and impact evaluations.

The course will 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 complement and inform one another, as well as demarcation of various types of program evaluation (design-phase, formative, summative, process, goal-oriented, fidelity-focused, theory-based, etc.). There will also be careful distinctions drawn between program evaluation as such, on the one hand, and other related but separate forms of managerial assessment, such as whole-organization evaluations, personnel performance evaluations, curricular evaluations, and the like.

The course will draw on the practitioner experience of both instructor and students, and it will provide opportunities for field- and community-based research on actual evaluation projects. It is intended to help students develop critical-analytical skills and mastery of methodological tools, consistent with *best practices* in evaluation, including those pertaining to community-engaged, culturally-responsive evaluation research. It also aims to strengthen student research, writing, and communication skills.

In addition to numerous lectures, case studies, and readings posted to UNM LEARN, there is one required case-based textbook, which will be read in its entirety; it is available from the UNM Bookstore and from online sources:

A Practical Guide to Program Evaluation Planning, 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, contribute to, and benefit from their classes. Confidentiality will be maintained as indicated by a student's circumstances.

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

There are several alternative sources of evaluation in determining final course grade: group presentations based on case studies from the course readings or one of the instructor's practitioner evaluations as a case study—the *Accelerate NM Evaluation*; a case summary and analysis paper based on one of these case presentations in which the student has participated, or, finally, a 12-15 page literature review relevant to the student's professional paper. Students must do three of four projects, as follows: either two case presentations plus a paper (case analysis or literature review), or three case presentations (no paper, in that instance). *Only the two highest-scoring projects will be counted in the final grade.* Sample past case analysis papers will be posted to UNM LEARN.

General class participation will also be weighed, albeit much less heavily, particularly in grade borderline cases, as explained immediately below.

The two highest scoring projects, taken and averaged together, will count for 95 percent of the final grade. Finally, the quality of each individual student's general class participation will count for 5 percent of the final grade. Case presentations are themselves an important way in which class participation is organized in the class. However, contributions to class discussion will constitute the principal form of class participation for grading purposes. Five percent of the final grade will be based on consistently positive contributions to class discussion; they will also be determinative of A and A+ grades (which require correspondingly positive class participation, on a consistent basis).

The written assignment is as follows:

(1) ***Written Assignment:*** One case summary and analysis paper of 10-12 pages length (typed, double-spaced, in Times New Roman 12-size font), including any citations or appendices. 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 on UNM LEARN. The paper must integrate (i.e., make explicit and 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; outside research may complement these sources.

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.

Case presentation/written assignment options:

1. As an alternative to the case analysis paper, a student with a propaper or other final project topic in mind may do a literature search and literature review and synthesis of 12-15 pages length 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 course case that 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: A paper (case analysis or literature review) 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 two weeks of the final class meeting will not provide enough time for revisions, so all first submissions must be in no later than Monday November 24 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 any version of MS Word, to 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 and not wishing to take the revision option may simply submit their papers by the beginning of the last class period. Papers submitted for the first time after November 25 but by the last class period will be considered to be submitted on time—there simply will not be an opportunity for revision of these papers.

(2) Case presentations—As already indicated, every student will participate in co-leading 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—The entirety or totality of the student’s participation and contribution will be weighed in arriving at the class participation grade, but with stress on contributions to general class discussion. 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 witting or unwitting disruption of class discussion in any form is unacceptable, as detailed in the “Safe Space” policy that follows.

Safe Space/Consideration Policy: ground rules for a positive classroom environment and experience

We would all agree that classroom discourse must exhibit respect for all other persons, not only within the confines of the classroom but also in general. Consequently, there can obviously be no denigration of anyone (in relation to case materials, readings, videos, or any other point of reference), on account of race, ethnicity, gender, disability status, sexual orientation, or religious or political perspective. In sum, respect and consideration is to be shown in all of our dealings and communications with one another. Explicit statement of this policy is needed to ensure that all feel comfortable and free to articulate their viewpoints.

Class discussion allows for disagreement, but comments have to be sustained by evidence, particularly evidence from class materials and readings; they are not to be unsupported assertions of opinion, much less personal confrontation. Unnecessary interruption of others is unacceptable during class. This includes carrying on conversations during class, checking cell phones or other electronic devices for messages,

texting, and other distractions. Students are free to leave the classroom if they need to engage in such activities, provided they proceed quietly and without disrupting or distracting the class.

While these problems are rare, they do come up sometimes. However unlikely, serious breaches of this policy may result in administrative or University sanctions, including administrative drop of a student from the course. The instructor will not be interrupting class to call attention to these kinds of problems if they do arise, unless absolutely necessary for continued conduct of that evening's class. No other notification is required for the instructor to take up any of these sanctioning options.

Stated more positively, we all owe one another consideration, respect, and regard, so that all students can benefit from class interaction and thereby produce their very best work. Our students have generally exceeded these expectations in the past, but their explicit statement is necessary nonetheless.

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.*

Brief Guidelines for written and group-presented case analyses

- Determine *what*: What are issues in the case? What are *the most important* issues, based on your own knowledge and judgment, and based on conceptual or theoretical constructs in the readings?
- Determine *how*: How these issues related, conceptually and dynamically, in some hierarchy of importance, by some criterion of judgment . What are the dynamics of conflict or leadership or whatever central construct you are examining?
- Determine *why*: Why are these issues and constructs related? I.e., what is the critical explanation that is provided of issues and their linkage in the case?
- Consider and critically apply a model or theoretical construct, or a combination of models/constructs, that includes the various levels of action and analysis involved: individual, organizational, interorganizational, and political.

Evaluation of Case Presentations and Written Case Analyses—grading criteria include, most prominently, whether or to what extent the student

- Demonstrates an understanding of the key issues illustrated in/by the case study.
- Uses theories and concepts and analytical models well to elucidate the case.
- Demonstrates a clear understanding of crucial issues in the case; relate these intelligibly to key concepts (models, analytical frameworks) found in the readings.
- Provides in-depth articulation (in verbal presentation) or write-up (in paper) of a few important ideas. Doing so is more important than addressing many ideas. Incisive analysis rather than over-broad, crowded analysis is essential—do not give too much background or stray far from the case material with references brought in from outside the course. Readings-based analysis again key,

although you are also welcome to bring in your own insights and experience, provided it is not an overly anecdotal account or extraneous or disconnected to the case study.

Getting to the Essence of Cases in Presentations and in Case Summary & Analysis Papers

- Focus much more on analysis of key issues that you want to highlight than on retelling of the case—assume that students in the class have read the case. To the extent that there is summary of the case and any additional background to it, these should have a direct bearing on your analysis.
- When possible, connect the case summary and analysis to class readings (texts, posted readings).
- Try to keep individual class presentations to 10 minutes, 15 minutes maximum, and group presentations in their totality to 45 minutes, an hour maximum. Avoid having too many slides and extraneous material in your part of the presentation.
- **Please do not read notes at length when presenting cases.**

These caveats aside, you are in charge of your presentation when you come before the class. Feedback on both written and group case analyses/presentations is one on one via email, to the individual student, typically within a week of the group presentation and within a week and a half of submission of a paper, depending on circumstances. Grades are communicated as they become available.

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.

It should be underscored that 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 University webpage.

It is expected that students will 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 your paper's 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. That effort may well be more time-consuming than students looking forward to grades may appreciate.

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*.

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 and distribution to the class as a final syllabus.

Reading and assignment schedule; by class # (dates provided in the final, posted syllabus:

- 1 & 2: **Introduction to the course and to the subdiscipline of program evaluation;** brief history of program evaluation and performance measurement; discussion of the case method and of case presentation, and assignment of cases.
3. **Overview of Program Evaluation. Collaborative evaluation. Evaluation and case study.** Read "Program Evaluation & Case Study," "Theoretical Underpinnings of Practical Participatory Evaluation," and "Participatory Evaluation in International Development" (all posted). Read and discuss "Cross-functional Team in a National Laboratory: A Case Study" (Rivera & Valdez), & "Innovation Diffusion, Network Features, and Cultural Communication Variables" (Rivera & Rogers), "NARCH Year 3 Evaluation Plan" (Rivera), all in Readings 1 folder under Class Reading/Supplemental Reading on UNM LEARN.

4. **Overview of Program Evaluation Methods and Approaches.** Read “Logic Models in Telling Your Program’s Performance Story,” “Network Approach to Evaluation,” “Network Logic Model,” all required, all in the Readings 2 folder. Also read Rivera, Mario A., first author, Michael Howland Davis, coauthor, Andrew Feldman, and Carla Rachkowski, contributing authors, “An Outcome Evaluation of an Adult Education and Postsecondary Alignment Program: The Accelerate New Mexico Experience,” *Problems and Perspectives in Management 11* (4), 2013. “Accelerate NM” (Rivera & Howland Davis, under ‘Accelerate NM article and other materials,’ required reading).
5. **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). Additional required reading: “the Fidelity-Adaptation Relationship in Evaluation” (posted to the Readings 2 folder). Continue discussion of Rivera & Howland Davis, et al., ‘Accelerate NM’ article.

Recommended readings: “Collaborative Evaluation for Community Change,” Bourdieu (1973) “Reproduction” and Ibarra (1999) “Multicontextuality,” also in the Readings 2 folder (Bourdieu and Ibarra are required readings, however, for anyone presenting the Accelerate NM evaluation case).

6. **Evaluation of Collaborative and Partnered Programs. Logic Models.** Discuss and plan for site visits to Math Experience sites. Additional Math Experience evaluation materials to be discussed (actual 2014 evaluation; proposal for the current, 2015 evaluation. *Presentation 1*, of a posted case, either “Street-involved Youth Program in Vancouver” or “MicroCredit Enterprises and *ProMujer*: Analyzing Program Evaluation Methods in the Microfinance Boom” (assignment of one of these cases to be determined in consultation with the class during the first two class sessions).
7. **The Program Theory Conceptual Framework; Theory-driven Evaluation; Evaluation Design and Stages**—Holden Chapter 1, Introduction, and Chapters 2 & 3. “Evaluation Planning Here and Now.” *Presentation 2, Holden chapter 3 case* (first case in Holden text), *Planning for an Education Evaluation*, by Julie Marshall.

Read “Role-sharing Between Evaluators and Stakeholders in Practice” (required, Readings 1 folder). Block, chapters 7, 8 & 9 (recommended, Readings 1 folder).
8. **Stakeholder Involvement in Program Planning and Evaluation; Strategic Planning and Management**—Holden Ch. 4, with second case in the Holden text, *Planning for a Service Program Evaluation*, by Mari Millery. *Presentation 3: chapter case presentation*. Also read “A Multidisciplinary Model of Evaluation Capacity Building” (required, Readings folder 3).
9. **Design-phase and Early Implementation Evaluation; Formative Evaluation**—Holden, Ch. 5—third Holden text case, *Planning for a Community-Based Program Evaluation*, by Thomas Reischl and Susan Franzen. *Presentation 4: chapter case presentation*. Also read

“Rapid Equity Focused Evaluation” (required, Readings folder 3);

Recommended reading is “Retaining Clients in a Cohort Study” (Readings folder 3).

10. **Mature-Phase Program Implementation Evaluation; Summative Evaluation**—Holden Ch. 6—with fourth Holden text case, *Planning for a Media Evaluation*, by W. Douglas Evans, Kevin Davis, and Matthew Farrelly. *Presentation 5: chapter case presentation*. Also read “Results-mapping Evaluation: A Case Study” (recommended, readings folder 4) and Chen, “Formal Theory versus Stakeholder Theory” (required, Chen readings folder).
11. **Program Redesign in Evaluation; Longitudinal Data Monitoring and Assessment; Organizational Accountability**—Holden Ch. 7, “Program Evaluation Planning: Overview and Analysis,” Zimmerman and Holden. *Presentation 6: presentation of posted case “HIV/AIDS in Thailand.”* Recommended reading: “Advocacy and Evaluation in International Aid Programs (readings folder 4).
12. **Efficacy versus Effectiveness Evaluation in Outcomes Assessment. Stakeholder consultation in program evaluation**—*Presentation 7: presentation of posted case “Team Read.”* Also read “Literacy Coaching and School Social Resources” (recommended) and “Evaluation Capacity-building: Administrator & Teacher Perspectives” (required, both in Readings folder 4).
13. **Revisiting Formative and Outcome forms of Evaluation; Theory-driven Evaluation**—Chen, “Theory-driven Evaluation Perspective” (required, Chen readings folder). Recommended readings: “Evaluating Networks” (Sydow) and “A Transaction Cost-Based Approach to Partnership Performance Evaluation.” First round of *Presentation 8: Accelerate Math Camp Evaluation* presentations, based on site visits to be scheduled, reading and group work based on the Accelerate Math Camp 2013 through 2015 yearly *Evaluation Reports*, and supporting materials, all posted to UNM LEARN under **Accelerate NM article and other materials**.
14. **Politics and roles in Program Evaluation; professional judgment in program evaluation. Culturally-responsive evaluation research.** Second round of *Presentation 8*, of the “Accelerate Math Camp Evaluation” and supporting materials (to be posted to UNM LEARN under **Accelerate NM article and other materials**). Video presentation of actual 2012 and 2014 Accelerate Math Experience focus groups. Discussion of the group and video presentations.
15. **Conclusion of the course.** Conclude discussion of the Accelerate NM case, in relation to class readings as possible.

All papers (either first submissions or revisions) are due no later than the beginning of this final class period; earlier paper submissions are encouraged, as stipulated under course requirements above.
