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MH512
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Spring 2001
Office Hrs:

AJ 203 Seminar
JUSTICE POLICY ANALYSIS

Course Description

An analysis of justice system policies and procedures, with an emphasis on how policies are formulated, evaluated and interpreted. **Course Prerequisites:** Statistics 95 or equiv., AJ 105 and AJ202.

Course Objectives

The major objectives of the course are fivefold: (1) provide a basic understanding of the evaluation and policy analysis process; (2) to gain entrée into a criminal justice agency; (3) to identify an operational program; (4) to establish a hypothetical program evaluation, and (5) to suggest hypothetical policy implications for program improvement.

Texts

Weiss, C.H., *Evaluations*, 2nd ed. (Upper Saddle Rive, N.J.: Prentice Hall), 1998.

King, J.A.; Lyons-Morris, L.; and Taylor Fitz-Gibbon, C. eds. *How to Assess Program Implementation*. (Newbury Park, CA: Sage), 1987.

Kirchner, R. A.; Pryzbylski, R. K.; and Cardella, R. A. (1994). *Assessing the Effectiveness of Criminal Justice Programs*. Wash., D.C.: Justice Research and Statistical Association.

Course Structure

The course will be conducted in a seminar style, which means that both the student and the instructor share responsibility for the success of the course. Participation in the class is required. Participation is considered to be more than being in attendance; it includes discussions indicating knowledge of the subject matter and/or asking probaing questions. Thus, it is imperative that the assigned materials be read and “digested” prior to each class meeting. Participation will be assessed on a weekly basis with the final participation grade based on the weekly totals. Points will be assigned as follows:

0 points =	Absent from class
2 points =	Participation <u>with</u> knowledge content
4 points =	Multiple comments with superior knowledge content

Course Evaluation

Evaluation/Policy Analysis Paper (including presentation, outline, and bibliography)	60%
Class Participation/Project Contribution	40%

Evaluation/Policy Analysis Project Requirements

A research paper describing the hypothetical evaluation of an ongoing criminal justice program (or defined organizational problem), and a discussion of hypothetical policy implications is required. You or your team will seek out an agency official or representative who can describe an operational program within their agency they would like evaluated. In general, the program should not have been previously evaluated; however, a previously evaluated program can be used if entirely “new” evaluation criteria is developed. Another tact would be to evaluate/analyze a particular “problem” an agency may perceive it has and recommend how the problem can be rectified or improved.

Your charge is to develop a research design that could be used to evaluate the program’s effectiveness, and to develop policies which, if implemented, could improve the program’s operations.

Note: If you currently work in a criminal justice agency, you **may not** use your agency for evaluation/policy analysis purposes; that is, you must seek out and gain entrée to a “nonfamiliar” agency. Of course, others in the class may use your agency (you can help them to gain entrée) if appropriate.

Project Team

You will work on the paper with one other class member of your choosing or by yourself, if necessary. In general, the paper is an evaluation design which could be used to evaluate an agency’s program (e.g., treatment, curfew, gun control, community policing, recidivism) or problem area (e.g., supervision, motivation, job design).

It is “hypothetical” in that no actual data will be collected (except possibly in the case of an “overachiever” group), but that general “findings” will be extrapolated primarily from the literature review, but also from your own observations and/or from agency interviews. Policy implications and recommendations for change will be discussed from these sources.

Please keep in mind that each member is equally responsible for all parts of the paper (i.e., Parts I through IV), agency visitation and interviews, and paper preparation and presentation. Especially important is that each team member **must** contribute equally to the Literature Review of the paper (i.e., 50% of the sources utilized). Each member should begin the review by doing a “search” of their own, then compare references and decide which sources to emphasize.

Grading: In addition to the normal expectations for a graduate research paper, this paper will also be assessed from the standpoint of its potential utility to the criminal justice agency. The central question would be: Does the paper provide sufficient information that agency personnel could adequately conduct their own “real” evaluation based on your evaluation plan?

Length: The length of the paper will be 18-22 typewritten, double spaced pages, not including references page(s) and appendices (e.g., measuring instruments).

Standards: The following standards apply to the final paper:

- Typewritten and double spaced (250 wpp for a minimum length of 4,500 words).
- Correct punctuation, spelling and mechanics
- Properly referenced, using APA style format
- Cited materials in paper must also appear in the Reference Section
- Appendices
- No plagiarism

Paper Format

Part I Introduction

Describe criminal justice agency program
Brief historical background

Part II Literature Review

Describe previous research (minimum of 6 empirical/historical studies from major research journals of a similar nature; “outside” studies may be necessary. **Note:** At least one-half of the studies must be within the last seven years. (See Criminal Justice Abstracts.)
Describe designs and quality of the research efforts (e.g., expert/quasi-expert/survey; control variables; sample, etc.)
Report findings.

Part III Design of the Evaluation

Research design: type of design, important variables, etc.
Sample
Instrumentation: measuring instruments/methods
Data analysis (e.g., t-test, chi-square, Pearson’s r, simple descriptive data, etc.)

Part IV Expected Findings

Expected results; based on literature review findings (including interviews, observations, and general “feelings” about the program).

Part V Policy Implications

Recommended policy changes (realistic with respect to agency needs, manpower, budget constraints, etc.)

Presentation to Class

A formal presentation of the paper to the class is required. The presentation is considered to be part of the paper requirement and is only graded in extreme (good or bad) cases (up to ½ point).

Due to the class the day of the presentation:

- Outline of report (1-2pps.)
- References page (of works cited)

Early Review of Papers

It is **strongly encouraged** that you turn in a paper for early review (see schedule) – even though only partially completed (e.g. intro; some lit review and design; and some references). The paper will be critiqued and handed back for final completion.

AJ 203 Course Outline

<u>Meeting</u>	<u>Activity</u>
Feb. 1	Introduction: Class Prerequisites; class requirements; project and team requirements.
Feb. 8	Project Discussion: General; Team interests Reading: W: Chap. 1 (pp. 4-10 & 15-16); Chap. 2; Chap. 3 (pp. 46-55); and K, L-M, F-G Appendix. Team formation and initial meetings
Feb. 15	Discussion: Measurement and Instrumentation (examples) Reading: Chaps. 4 & 6; K, L-M, F-G: Chap. 2; K,P,F (All). Project discussion/team meetings
Feb. 22	Discussion: Data Collection Reading: W. Chaps. 7 & 11; K, L-M, F-G: Chaps. 3, 4, 5 & 6 Team meetings
Feb. 29	Discussion: Research Design Reading: W: Chaps. 8 & 9; Campbell & Stanley Research Design handout
Mar. 7	Project Discussion: <u>Agency Chosen/Topic Delimited</u> Determine Individual Team Meeting Times Overlap/Team meetings
Mar. 14	Individual Team Meetings (one-half) <u>Typed Outline Due</u> (2-3 paragraphs/sources/instruments) Team Project Day (one-half)
Mar. 21	Individual Team Meetings (one-half) <u>Typed Outlines Due</u> (2-3 paragraphs, sources, instruments) Team Project Day (one-half)
Mar. 28	Spring Break
Apr. 4	Team Project/Research Day
Apr. 11	Discussion: Analyzing & Reporting Data Reading: W: Chap. 12; K, L-M, F-G: Chap. 7
Apr. 18	Determine Presentation Order; Q and As Reading: W: Chaps. 13 & 14/Overlap
Apr. 25	Presentations Begin <u>Outline and Bibliography Due to Class</u> <u>Early Review Papers Due</u>
May 2	Presentations Continue <u>Early Review Papers Returned</u>
May 9	Presentations Continue
May 16	Final Presentations/ <u>Final Papers Due</u>