

JS 203: Justice Policy Analysis

Course Syllabus

TH: 5:30-8:15

Professor: Mark E. Correia, Ph.D.
Office: MacQuarrie Hall 513
Hours: T/R: 9:00-10:00; 11:50-12:50 or by appointment
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Course Description

This course is intended to provide a graduate level overview of EVALUATION RESEARCH as is conducted within the area of Justice Studies. As such, the course is designed to provide a comprehensive understanding of program evaluation and the policy analysis process—with an emphasis on applied research affecting public policy. This course will include the following principal elements: a review of the purpose and importance of evaluation research; the range of approaches developed for conducting program evaluations; and a review of the principal research methods and techniques employed in conducting evaluation research. The course also features an active skill building element intended to enhance the ability of students to design an evaluation research project, engage in evaluation research and present the findings to a variety of audiences. This course is seminar based, which means that students are required to actively participate in all class discussions and at times, lead the discussion.

Required Materials

Berk, R. and P. Rossi (1998). *Thinking About Program Evaluation, 2nd Ed.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Fitz-Gibbon, Carol and L. Morris (1987). *How to Design a Program Evaluation.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Walters, J. (1998). *Measuring Up: Governing's Guide to Performance Measurement for Geniuses (and Other Public Managers).*

Weiss, C. (1998). *Evaluation, 2nd Ed.* Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Students will be required to access WebCT for this course. If you do not currently have a WebCT account, please go to <http://sjsu.webct.com/webct/public/home.pl> and follow the instructions to create an account. The WebCT login for this course is http://sjsu.webct.com/SCRIPT/js203sp07mc/scripts/serve_home.

WebCT will be used to distribute additional readings for this course as distributing any course related materials. Those readings denoted by a "*" can be found on WebCT.

Suggested Materials

Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (2001), 5th Edition. These are available in the reference section of the bookstore or can be found [online](http://www.apastyle.org) at www.apastyle.org.

Course Requirements

Participation (20%): Attendance in this course is both required and strongly encouraged. It is assumed that students are well prepared and willing to answer course-related questions when called upon and, when appropriate, to take part in class discussions. Hence, active participation in class discussions is required.

Seminar Lead (20%): Students will be required to lead one class discussion on the assigned readings. Hence, leading the seminar will require students to not only understand the material, but also present a lengthy discussion and analysis of the readings to the class.

Article Critique (15%): There is a tremendous body of literature on evaluation studies in nearly every academic field. In order to become familiar with the nature of the evaluation research conducted in criminal justice and related fields, students will be required to critique an existing study. The study should be conducted within the field of criminal justice or a related field and needs to be found in an academic peer reviewed journal or an official report.

Evaluation Project (30%): The evaluation project can be either a quantitative or qualitative analysis of an existing program. This requires students to first identify an operational program, gain the necessary approval and access to the program, design an evaluation of the program, evaluate the program and suggest policy implications for program improvement. Students will be required to form a small group (3-4 individuals) to undertake the project. Each individual within the group is required to actively participate in the project and will be evaluated by other group members. Given our time constraints, students should have formed a group and found a program to evaluate by the 4th week of class.

Presentation (15%): Students will be required to present their evaluation project to the class during the dates specified below. The presentation will allow students to discuss their project with the rest of the class and should entail a detailed discussion of the group's project. Those presenting should distribute and outline to the class and limit their presentation to 30-minutes.

Email: I will accept assignments via email according to the following protocol. Deviations from this protocol will not be accepted and will be bounced back:

1. **Subject Line:** This line will contain the student's name, course and the assignment number. For example, Mark Correia, JS 203, Article Critique.
2. **Format:** All papers sent electronically must be saved in .doc or .rtf. I will not accept papers saved in .wps, .wpd or pasted into an email. If you use Wordperfect or Microsoft Works, you will need to save your document in .doc or .rtf.
3. **Email Address:** All assignments will be emailed to mcorreia@casa.sjsu.edu.
4. **Confirmation:** I will send out a confirmation receipt for those emails with assignments that I have received within 24hrs. If you do not receive a confirmation, your assignment was not received.
5. **Responsibility:** It is the student's responsibility to make sure that the assignment is properly attached to the email. If the assignment is not attached and received by the due date, the assignment will be considered late.

Course Outline

This course consists primarily of lecture held on Thursday. Due to the number of students and different views that he/she brings, it is the instructor's belief that all of our views are enriched by way of discussion. Please be considerate of others and their opinions as everyone will have an opportunity to express their opinion.

I have listed my email address and office hours for your convenience. At all times, I will be available via email. If you cannot make my office hours, nor have access to email, please set up an appointment. While I may be in my office at other times, I may not be available to meet.

Week #1

Jan. 25: Introduction: Policy and Program Evaluation Research

Student's sharing of Career Interests, etc.
Course Design, Objectives and Goals
Course Requirements and Access to Course Materials
Course Grading Policies
Encouragement of Team Efforts and Active Collaboration

Week #2

Feb. 1: The Public and Non-Profit Sector Setting and the Ongoing Demand for Evaluation Research: A Premium on Independent Evaluation Research
***Required Reading: Walters, All
American Evaluation Association, Guidelines for Evaluators****

Discussion Topics: Understanding the differences between program evaluation and research; Discussion of process and outcome evaluations

Week #3

Feb. 8: Concepts and Key Terminology in Evaluation Research
***Required Reading: Berk and Rossi, 1 & 2
Weiss, Chapt. 1 & 2***

Discussion Topic: What is the role of the evaluator throughout the evaluation process? What are some of the challenges that an evaluator may face?

Week #4

Feb. 15: Data Collection: Building a Solid Foundation
***Required Reading: Weiss, Chapt. 3-6
Gibbon and Morris, Chapt. 1
Berk and Rossi, Chapt. 3 & 4***

Discussion Topics: The Politics of Evaluation Research; Assessing the impact of politics on evaluation research.

Week #5

Feb. 22: Research Design In Evaluation Studies
***Required Reading: Weis, Chapt. 8-10
Gibbon and Morris, Chapt. 2 & 3***

Discussion Topic: The importance of reliability and validity in evaluation research.

Week #6

March 1: Quantitative Designs: II
Required Reading: Gibbon and Morris, Chaps. 3-7

Discussion Topic: Evaluation Research in Criminal Justice
*Required Reading: Maxfield, Frugal Guide, All**

Week #7

March 8: Qualitative Evaluation Research
*Required Reading: Yin, Chaps. 1, 2, 7 & 8**

Discussion Topic: Advantages and disadvantages of qualitative and quantitative measures.

Article Critique Due

Week #8

March 15: **Spring Break**

Week #9

March 22: Interpretation of findings and policy implications
Required Reading: Weiss, Chapt. 12

Discussion Topic: The role of statistical tests in evaluation research.

Week #10

March 29: Ethics and Integrity in Research
Required Reading: Weiss, Chapt. 14

Discussion Topic: How can you maintain high ethical standards while conducting quality evaluation research?

Week #11

April 5: **Research Day**

Week #12

April 12: **International Police Executive Symposium, Dubai, UAE**

Week #13

April 19: Presenting Evaluation Findings:
*Required Reading: Morris, Gibbon and Freeman, Chaps. 1, 2 & 4**

Week #14

April 26: **Evaluation Project Formal Presentations (30 minute limit)**

Week #15

May 3: **Evaluation Project Formal Presentations (30 minute limit)**

Week #16

May 10: **Evaluation Project Formal Presentations (30 minute limit)**

Final Paper Due

Week #17

May 17: **Scheduled Final Exam 5:15-7:30**

Syllabus Addendum

Grading: In order to receive a grade for this course, all course requirements must be completed. Failure to complete any of them may result in a failing grade for the course. Paper and course grades may be disputed at the instructor's convenience (or during office hours). It is important to note, however, that upon review, the instructor reserves the right to increase as well as decrease the grade in question. Late assignments and papers will not be accepted nor any extra credit provided.

Academic Dishonesty: The "I got caught cheating" policy for this class is swift, severe, and certain: that is, if you cheat, chances are very good that you will be caught, then publicly shamed, and punished with a failing grade for the course. In addition, plagiarism is absolutely unacceptable. If you are unsure what constitutes plagiarism, please contact the professor—while many students are ignorant of this offense, ignorance is not an excuse. I have several speeding tickets that prove this point!

Academic Integrity: Academic integrity is essential to the mission of San José State University. As such, students are expected to perform their own work (except when collaboration is expressly permitted by the course instructor) without the use of any outside resources. Students are not permitted to use old tests, quizzes when preparing for exams, nor may they consult with students who have already taken the exam. When practiced, academic integrity ensures that all students are fairly graded. Violations to the Academic Integrity Policy undermine the educational process and will not be tolerated. It also demonstrates a lack of respect for oneself, fellow students and the course instructor and can ruin the university's reputation and the value of the degrees it offers. We all share the obligation to maintain an environment that practices academic integrity. Violators of the Academic Integrity Policy will be subject to failing this course and being reported to the

Office of Student Conduct & Ethical Development for disciplinary action that could result in suspension or expulsion from San José State University. The policy on academic integrity can be found at: http://sa.sjsu.edu/student_conduct

To better understand plagiarism and to aid you in making sure that you are not plagiarizing, please see me and/or visit: <http://tutorials.sjlibrary.org/plagiarism/index.htm>

Course Add/Drop Statement: Instructors are permitted to drop students who fail to attend the first scheduled class meeting and who fail to inform the instructor prior to the second class meeting of the reason for any absence and their intention to continue in the class. Some instructors will drop students who do not meet the stated course prerequisites. However, instructors are not required to drop a student from their course. ***It is the student's responsibility to make sure classes are dropped.***

You, the student, are responsible for understanding the policies and procedures about add/drops, academic renewal, withdrawal, etc. found at: http://sa.sjsu.edu/student_conduct

ADA: “If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability, or if you need special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, please make an appointment with me as soon as possible, or see me during office hours. Presidential Directive 97-03 requires that students with disabilities register with DRC to establish a record of their disability.”

Electronic Devices: Please turn off all cell phones, pagers, PDA's or any other electronic device that “makes noise”. While I commend those of you who have mastered text messaging, the use of these devices during class is disruptive and will not be tolerated. If I see you text messaging, I will ask you to leave the room. The use of computers in the classroom will not be allowed—accept for use during a group presentation.

Classroom Etiquette: Class motto: “Treat others as you think they would like to be treated”. Yes, this is a spin on the ever popular, but not so empathetic phrase. This is a time to open your minds to new ideas, to explore new concepts, so please take advantage of this opportunity. Further, please be respectful of others and show them common courtesy. I firmly believe that the learning process is enriched by discussion, but damaged by arguments. Respect and professionalism are the guiding principles of this class. Tardiness will not be tolerated, if you are late, do not disturb class—wait until break to enter the classroom.

Written Work: I understand that many of our students have very busy life's, filled with work and family obligations. I understand that “school work” is difficult to fit in to an already full schedule. With this said, I do expect quality work from everyone. Write every paper as though it is your best paper ever and be proud of your paper and work that you complete for this course.

As a side note: I am well aware of the websites that offer papers to students and have software that allows me to compare papers I receive to the thousands of databases of papers that exist. Trust me, it is not worth your effort, chances are, I will find out. All papers that are turned in to this class will be submitted to turnitin.com. Please see the course website for additional information.

+/- Grading: This course will be using the +/- system on final grades based on the following percentages:

95-100:	A
90-94:	A-
87-89:	B+ -
84-86:	B
80-83:	B-
77-79:	C+
74-76:	C
70-73:	C-

Paper Format

The paper should be approximately 20 typewritten, double-spaced pages with 12-point font. This does not include references, figures, tables and appendices. It should be written in APA editorial style, especially the format for references and footnotes. Attention should be paid to punctuation, spelling and grammar in order to present a professional product. The paper should be organized under the following headings:

1. Executive Summary (to be written last but placed at the front of the paper). This is a 1-2 page succinct summary of the research in a non-technical manner describing the program, why it was important to study, a summary of the methodology you used to analyze the program, the findings and limitations of the research, and the social policy recommendations for changing or developing the program.
2. Introduction: This will be an opening introduction to the criminal justice program that you have chosen to study, a brief description of its historical development, its goals and objectives.
3. Literature Review: Here you will survey previous research studies and policy articles that have investigated this topic, making sure that you cover all of the important ones in the last ten years. A minimum of 6 studies should be examined, and more if there is little direct research on this subject and you need to draw upon more tangential prior research.

The literature review may be organized historically, or in terms of different theoretical or strategic approaches to dealing with the criminal justice problem that the program aims to ameliorate. Each previous research study should be briefly summarized in terms of the research design, sample, methods, and findings. Each policy article needs to be summarized in terms of its theoretical approach, policy principles, and specific guidelines for program formation.

The literature review should conclude with a brief summary of what has been found in previous studies, what are the controversial or null findings, what are the gaps in knowledge, and what methodological flaws plague prior work. (If possible, identify and evaluate alternative programs or policies that may be compared to the criminal justice program you have chosen to evaluate). All of this should lead into a statement of the purpose of your research and help justify the approach you take in your research design and policy analysis.

4. Design of the Evaluation: Describe the type of evaluation that you are conducting and give the rationale for choosing the particular research design. List the goals and the strategies (or operations) of the program and choose corresponding measures for each important process variable and outcome variable. Describe any informants or subjects, criteria for selection, and how they were recruited. Describe the methods of data collection in detail (e.g. focus groups, survey, documents, observation). Justify the reliability and validity of the measures that are used.
5. Data Analysis and Findings: Using data you have collected, *undertake one piece of the evaluation (e.g. either the formative or the outcome evaluation or part thereof)*. A formative evaluation involves describing the number and demographic characteristics of the clients and the providers of the program and the extent to which the program operated according to plan (e.g. break downs by race, age, gender, criminal history etc.; variation in how the program was delivered in various settings, by different staff members; attendance and drop-out rates etc.) A formative evaluation can include qualitative descriptions of how the program operates from the point of view of various stakeholders or clients. An outcome evaluation means assessing the extent to which the program achieved the results that it was aiming to achieve (i.e. with reference to its goals). The outcome evaluation might include its cost-effectiveness. You may also undertake post-hoc analysis examining who seemed to benefit from what, and other, non-intended effects of the program (both beneficial and deleterious). If you have significant amounts of missing data, attempt to assess how your results have been biased by the missing data.

6. Discussion and Policy Implications: Summarize, discuss and interpret the principle findings, speculating how these data are similar or dissimilar to previous studies and why. Note the limitations of the research and caution about the possible misuse or over generalization of the findings. Most importantly, discuss the policy implications for how the program could be better implemented or redesigned, for whom it works best and for whom it does not seem to be suited. Evaluate the resource and budgetary implications of the changes and redesigns that you are proposing. In making proposals, be realistic and aware of what is ethically sound, economically feasible and politically acceptable.

7. References

8. Figures and Tables referred to in the text of the report.

9. Appendix. This should include your evaluation measures, and any supporting documents from the agency that describe the goals, philosophy and operations of the program that are too lengthy to include in the text.