

## **EDA 383 Program Evaluation**

### **Spring, 2009**

Room: SZB 524 Dates and Times: Thur. 4-7 p.m.

Unique # \_\_\_\_\_

Instructor: Deborah D. Nance, Ph. D.

#### **The Context**

Educational leadership must guide the vision for the quality and effectiveness of educational programs to meet the multi-faceted and ever-expanding needs of learners. Limited federal, state, and local funding levels constrain educational resources dedicated to the enhancement of education programs. Nonetheless, stakeholders from many sectors (legislators, public media, community members, parents, students) constantly seek improvement of school programs. Often, the quest for educational leaders is to do more with less. These external pressures, along with the internal drive educators themselves experience, underlie the need for well-designed program evaluation. Such systemic examination provides the basis for determining what to retain and refine, and what to revise or discard within existing educational programs and services.

#### **The Problem**

Educational leaders must be prepared to step in to critical administrative positions armed with well-founded conceptual structures and judgment criteria, knowledge of valid procedures for data collection and analysis, and skills in interpretation and dissemination of performance results, process effectiveness, and system capacity. These leadership capacities are critical to create and maintain effective and efficient educational programs that serve the specific needs of student populations served.

#### **The Course**

This course for the preparation of educational leaders at the University of Texas at Austin is designed to address four expected learner outcomes: knowledge of national program evaluation standards; understanding of major conceptual approaches for designing educational program evaluation activities; developing and implementing useful and valid educational evaluation design procedures; and reporting educational program evaluation results in a balanced and effective manner.

#### **The Goal**

Students will acquire knowledge and skills essential in developing and implementing useful and productive program evaluation procedures, analyzing program evaluation results with critical and thoughtful perspective, and sharing program evaluation results regarding the effectiveness of educational programs and systems effectively to interested stakeholders.

### **The Procedures**

The course will consist of four primary activities:

1) Information will be presented through lecture, electronic media, assigned readings, and class discussions on national standards for program evaluation and professional criteria for judging program evaluation effectiveness and appropriateness.

2) Each individual student will deliver to the class a written and media-based presentation illustrating a specific educational program evaluation approach and will guide class discussion on the value and limitations of the approach. Students will share electronic and hard copy versions of the presentation with the instructor and classmates.

3) Small teams of three to five class members will develop educational program evaluation projects comprised of original conceptual designs, appropriate evaluation procedures, and specific data collection tools (selected and/or created) that meet national standards. Team members will implement instructor-approved program evaluation activities; collect and analyze formative, summative, qualitative and quantitative data; analyze and summarize the results; and develop team-coordinated conclusions and recommendations.

4) Small team presentations of program evaluation results will be written in a manner suitable for public consumption by relevant stakeholders and will be presented orally and visually by the team and submitted in writing and electronically to the instructor and classmates.

*Optionally, upon pre-approval by the instructor,* individual students may select to complete the following assignment for course credit to substitute for participation in the team evaluation project:

Design a detailed systems-based decomposition scheme of an educational program the student has recently administered or is currently responsible for supervising or administering. The systems-based decomposition scheme will demonstrate context, inputs, processes, products (anticipated and unintended) for at least three levels of organizational functions. The systems-based decomposition scheme will be accompanied by a written document that communicates a comprehensive plan for feasible, useful, and appropriate evaluation procedures and instruments designed to collect information from each level of the system to determine the formative (incremental) and summative (comprehensive) worth of the system design. The written document will be formatted for dissemination to school leaders and stakeholder audiences.

The systems-based scheme and accompanying paper will be presented to the entire class in a class presentation orally and visually and submitted to the instructor and classmates in hard copy and electronically.

### **Textbooks**

Fitzpatrick, Jody L., Sanders, James R., and Worthen, Blaine R.  
Program Evaluation: Alternative Approaches and Practical Guidelines (2004).  
Boston: Pearson Education, Inc.

McNeil, Keith A.

How to Be Involved in Program Evaluation: What Every Administrator Needs to Know.  
Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Education, 2005.

The Joint Committee on Standards for Educational Evaluation, James R. Sanders, Chair  
The Program Evaluation Standards, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition: How to Assess Evaluations of Educational Programs (1994). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

### **Grades**

The following activities and products will determine grades:

1. Class attendance and active, thoughtful participation in class discussions (20%).
2. Quality and effectiveness of individual class presentation on assigned program evaluation approach (20%).
3. Accuracy and usefulness of written product used to organize and deliver the individual class presentation on assigned program evaluation approach (20%).
4. Degree to which original team project meets evaluation standards of utility, feasibility, propriety and accuracy (20%).
5. Effectiveness and usefulness of the class presentation on the team project (20%).
6. (*Optional upon instructor approval.*) Quality, clarity, logical integrity, and comprehensiveness of systems-based decomposition scheme; feasibility, appropriateness and usefulness of proposed evaluative plan; quality and potential decision-making impact of presentation prepared for a public audience as presented to classmates and instructor (40% substituting for items 4 & 5).
7. Any other assessments or products assigned by the instructor that are in the view of the instructor likely to enhance meeting course objectives (adjustments in percent to be determined if and when such assessments are assigned.)

### **Other Course information:**

1. No incomplete grades will be assigned except, in the sole judgment of the instructor, circumstances beyond the student's control have precluded the student completion of the course.
2. Class attendance is expected. Failure to attend and participate will adversely impact the course grade. Occasionally a student may have a conflict in schedule with class meeting dates, such as attendance at a professional conference. The instructor does not make a judgment nor provide excused

absences. It is the responsibility of the student to determine whether a class must be missed and to obtain any information or material that was presented in the class missed. However, if a student must miss a class, the student *should notify the instructor as soon as possible that they will be absent.*

3. Out of respect for all class participants, all electronic personal communication devices, such as cell phones and personal computers, should be turned off during class with the exception of devices that are needed to accommodate students with disabilities.
4. All assigned activities or products for the course are due on the date assigned for completion except, in the sole judgment of the instructor, when circumstances beyond the student's control delay submission. The student should notify the instructor in advance of a delayed submission. Scheduled class presentations need to be rescheduled as soon as possible. All late submissions or re-schedules will result in a minimum 10% reduction of the potential grade for the assignment.
5. Students with disabilities should feel free to discuss with the instructor any accommodation needs that are appropriate to their disability. The Office for Students with Disabilities, located on the 4<sup>th</sup> floor of the Student Services Building, is available to advise, counsel, communicate, and arrange for accommodations and so forth for students with identified disabilities.
6. Instructor Consultation Hours may be arranged in advance one hour prior to class meeting times and other times by appointment.
7. Students should feel free to communicate with the instructor:
  - a. Instructor email: [deborahnance@gmail.com](mailto:deborahnance@gmail.com)
  - b. Instructor cell phone: 512 917-32-35
  - c. Instructor home phone: 512 756-6941 or 512 343-9255

### **Additional Resources**

Aikin, Wilford M.  
Eight Year Study: The First Book  
<http://www.8yearstudy.org/index.html>

American Evaluation Association  
AEA Guiding Principles for Evaluators (Revised and ratified by AEA members, July, 2004)  
<http://www.eval.org/Publications/GuidingPrinciplesPrintable.asp>

Bain, Alan  
The Self-Organizing School: Next Generation Comprehensive School Reforms.  
Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Education, 2007.

Borich, Gary D. and Jemelka, Ron P.  
Programs and Systems: An Evaluation Perspective.  
New York, NY: Academic Press, 1982.

Cox, James

Finding the Story Behind the Numbers: A Tool-Based Guide for Evaluating Educational Programs. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press, 2007.

Davidson, E. Jane

Evaluation Methodology Basics. The Nuts and Bolts of Sound Evaluation.  
Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc., 2005.

Leithwood, Kenneth; Aitken, Robert; Jantzi, Doris

Making Schools Smarter: A System for Monitoring School and District Progress.  
Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press, Inc., 2001.

Patton, Michael Quinn

Qualitative Evaluation Checklist (September, 2003)

<http://www.wmich.edu/evalctr/checklists/qec.pdf>

Provus, Malcom

Discrepancy Model, Eric Article

[http://eric.ed.gov/ERICDocs/data/ericdocs2sql/content\\_storage\\_01/0000019b/80/35/09/74.pdf](http://eric.ed.gov/ERICDocs/data/ericdocs2sql/content_storage_01/0000019b/80/35/09/74.pdf)

Scriven, Michael

Key Evaluation Checklist (February 2007)

[http://www.wmich.edu/evalctr/checklists/kec\\_feb07.pdf](http://www.wmich.edu/evalctr/checklists/kec_feb07.pdf)

Stringer, Ernest T.

Action Research, Third Edition.

Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc., 2007.

Stufflebeam, Daniel L.

Program Evaluations Metaevaluation Checklist (1999)

[http://www.wmich.edu/evalctr/checklists/eval\\_model\\_metaeval.pdf](http://www.wmich.edu/evalctr/checklists/eval_model_metaeval.pdf)

Stufflebeam, Daniel L.

The CIPP Model for Evaluation: Paper Presented at the 2003 Annual Conference of the Oregon Program Evaluators Network, Portland, Oregon (October 3, 2003)

<http://www.wmich.edu/evalctr/pubs/CIPP-ModelOregon10-03.pdf>

Wikipedia

Management by Objectives

[http://www.wikipedia.org/wiki/Management\\_by\\_objectives](http://www.wikipedia.org/wiki/Management_by_objectives)