

**PPG1008H1: PROGRAM EVALUATION FOR PUBLIC POLICY  
UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO, WINTER 2015**

1. BASIC INFORMATION

Section L0101 meets Monday 2:10–5:00PM in CG 160

Section L0102 meets Tuesday 2:10–5:00PM in CG 160

Name: Jonathan Hall

Weeks teaching: 1–7

Office: GE 356

Phone: 416-978-5110

Email: jonathan.hall@utoronto.ca

Office hours: Thursday and Friday, 11AM–noon during Weeks 1–7; also by appointment

Name: James Radner

Weeks teaching: 1, 8–12

Office: CG 61A

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Office hours: Monday and Tuesday, 5–6PM during Weeks 8–12; also by appointment

Teaching fellow: Anjela Deyanska

Email: anjela.deyanska@mail.utoronto.ca

Office hours: TBA

Course website: <http://portal.utoronto.ca>

2. COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES

This course will introduce students to both quantitative and qualitative methods in program evaluation for public policy. Students will gain an understanding of when and how to use various methods of program evaluation and will be exposed to both theoretical concepts and case studies.

3. TEXTBOOKS

The following textbooks are available at the University of Toronto Bookstore. ISBNs are included so you can see if you can find cheaper versions online.

- Key resources for quantitative methods
  - Angrist, Joshua D. and Jorn-Steffen Pische. 2014. *Mastering Metrics*. Princeton University Press. ISBN: 9780691152844.
- Supplemental resource for quantitative methods
  - Stock, James H. and Mark W. Watson. 2011. *Introduction to Econometrics*, 3rd ed. Pearson/Addison-Wesley. ISBN: 0138009007.
- Key resource for qualitative methods
  - Patton, Michael Q. 2014. *Qualitative Research and Evaluation Methods*, 4th ed. Los Angeles: Sage. ISBN: 1412972124
  - Excerpts from this large volume, the locus classicus for the field, will be assigned for the qualitative portion of the course. Acquisition of the book itself would give you a superb and comprehensive reference, but is not required for this course.
- Supplemental resources for qualitative methods

- Rossi, Peter H., Lipsey, Mark W., and Howard E. Freeman. 2004. *Evaluation: A Systematic Approach*, 7th ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. ISBN: 0761908943
- Wholey, Joseph S., Hatry, Harry P., and Kathryn E. Newcomer. 2004. *Handbook of Practical Program Evaluation*, 2nd ed. San Francisco, California: Jossey-Bass. ISBN: 0787967130

#### 4. APPROACH

**For Weeks 1–7 (Part I).** This portion of the class is primarily lecture based, with regular group discussion. The prototypical class will start with a lecture on a particular econometric methodology and end with a discussion of a research paper.

**For Weeks 8–12 (Part II).** This portion of the course still includes regular lectures, but will have more emphasis on applications, case discussions, and in-class group work. Each class during Part II (except for Week 12, as described below) will be divided into three 50-minute periods as follows:

- *Period 1:* 2:10–3:00PM. Section meets in plenary (40 students). Lecture on core topic for the week.
- *Break:* 3:00–3:15PM
- *Period 2:* 3:15–4:05PM. Class divides into two subsections, meeting in adjacent rooms. (Students will be assigned to Subsection A or Subsection B for the entire second half of the course.) Subsection A meets with the course instructor and discusses the case study for the week. Subsection B meets with the Teaching Fellow and completes the student team assignment for the week (see the section on the Student Team Project below).
- *Period 3:* 4:10–5:00PM. Class is again in two subsections, with the program from Period 2 flipped across the subsections. Subsection B meets with the course instructor and discusses the case study for the week. Subsection A meets with the Teaching Fellow and completes the student team assignment for the week (see below).

The final class, Week 12, will not meet in section plenaries, but only in subsections. Special meeting times will be established for the Week 12 sessions so that the instructor meets with each subsection for 1 hour to discuss the week's topic and case, and for two hours for that subsection's student team presentations.

#### 5. REQUIREMENTS

**Prerequisites.** PPG1004H. Prerequisites requirements are strictly enforced.

#### 6. POLICIES

**First rule of holes.** Stop digging and get some help! Come see one of us, CAPS, or any of the other resources listed in Section 8.

**No glowing rectangles.** You are not allowed to have computers, tablets, phones, etc. out during class, except for when working on assignments with the teaching fellow. A growing body of research finds that even when electronic devices are used in the best possible way they still lead to worse student outcomes (Mueller and Oppenheimer, 2014). Each time we see your computer, tablet, phone, etc. in class will be penalized by a two percentage point reduction in your final grade.

**Email.** We check our University of Toronto email accounts once each business day and expect you to do the same. We will respond to all emails within two business days. When emailing us please prefix the subject line with [PPG1008] so that we can prioritize your message. Please copy the teaching fellow on any email sent to one of us.

In order to help us get to know you better, we would prefer that you ask questions in class, after class, or during office hours; rather than by email. In addition, it is generally more efficient to get any longer questions answered in person rather than over email.

**Attendance policy.** Although there are two sections for this course, you need to attend the section that you are registered in.

**Accommodation.** We are willing to provide reasonable accommodations for a variety of reasons (such as disability/health problems, religious observance, participation in an extra-curricular activity, death in the family, illness, or injury). To be fair to all the students in the course, we require documentation of the need for accommodation and a written request to consider a reasonable accommodation. For illness, injury, or a death in the family the documentation must be received within a week of the relevant exam or assignment due date. For any other reason the request must be made before the end of the second week of the course.

If you need an accommodation due to illness or injury you must provide us with an original, fully completed University of Toronto Verification of Student Illness or Injury form, available at <http://www.illnessverification.utoronto.ca>. The doctor's OHIP registration number must be provided. Please familiarize yourself with the FAQ at this website.

If you need an accommodation for a disability you should register with Accessibility Services <http://accessibility.utoronto.ca>.

**Late homework.** Late homework will be assessed a three percentage point penalty and an additional one percentage point penalty for every day late beyond the first.

**Appealing grades.** If you believe an assignment, quiz, or exam has been incorrectly graded, you may ask the person who graded it for a re-evaluation. You need to make this request as soon as possible after receiving the work back, and the request must be received within two weeks of the coursework being handed back. The entire work will be regraded and your grade may increase or decrease. We have this policy not to punish you for asking for a re-evaluation but because notwithstanding all our efforts to achieve precision in grading, grading inevitably involves a degree of randomness and in regrading we wish to reduce the randomness (both in your favor and against) on all parts of the work in order to come to a more precise measure of your true performance on the assignment. If after completing this process you still have a problem with any aspect of your grade, the overall grade appeal process under the university's policies remain available to you (see <http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/Assets/Governing+Council+Digital+Assets/Policies/PDF/grading.pdf>).

**No audio or video recordings.** You may not create audio or video recordings of classes, with the exception of those students requiring an accommodation for a disability, who must speak to us prior to beginning to record lectures.

**Exam rules.** We will follow the standard final exam rules for all course exams. For more details see <http://www.artsci.utoronto.ca/current/exams/reminder>.

**Academic Integrity.** We expect you to be honest, turn in your own work, and in all other ways follow the University of Toronto's Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters (<http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/policies/behaveac.htm>).

If you have questions or concerns about what constitutes appropriate academic behaviour or appropriate research and citation methods, you are expected to seek out additional information on academic integrity from your instructors or from other institutional resources (see <http://www.utoronto.ca/academicintegrity/resourcesforstudents.html>).

## 7. IMPORTANT DATES

- Class canceled: Monday, January 5th
- Make-up class: Tuesday, January 6th from 2-5pm in CG-160
- Make-up class: Friday, January 16th from 9am-noon in CG-160
- Ottawa trip, no class: Monday, January 19th and Tuesday, January 20th
- Reading week, no class: February 16th and 17th
- Class canceled: Monday, February 23rd
- Midterm exam: Tuesday, February 24th from 2-5pm in TBA
- Final Class: March 30-31, Special Sections Schedule TBA
- Final exam: Between April 13th–24th

## 8. RESOURCES

**Academic Success Centre.** <http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/>

**Accessibility Services.** <http://accessibility.utoronto.ca>

**Counseling & Psychological Services.** <http://caps.utoronto.ca/>

**Office of Student Academic Integrity.** <http://www.artsci.utoronto.ca/osai>

**Rights & Responsibilities.** <http://uoft.me/rights>

**Writing help.** <http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/>

**How not to plagiarize.** <http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/advice/using-sources/how-not-to-plagiarize>

## 9. GRADES

Grades will be based on

- Weeks 1–7 (Part I)
  - Weekly assignments (25%)
  - Midterm exam (25%)
- Weeks 8–12 (Part II)
  - Class participation (Weeks 8–12) (7.5%)
  - In-class group assignments (Weeks 8–11) (7.5%)
  - Team presentations (10%)
  - Final exam (25%)

We may curve the course grades upwards, but will not curve them down.

**Midterm exam.** 25% of your final grade will come from the midterm. *The midterm will be given on Tuesday, February 24th, from 2-5PM.* If you cannot take the midterms on this date, you must tell Professor Hall before the end of the second week of the course. No non-medical excuses will be accepted after that date. This exam can be regarded as the “final” for the material covered in Weeks 1–7.

**Final exam.** 25% of your final grade will come from the final exam. The final exam will be given as scheduled by the Office of the Faculty Registrar. The final exam will focus on material covered during Weeks 8–12. The material from Weeks 1–7 is a prerequisite for the subject matter of Weeks 8–12, and so it will be assumed, but not directly tested, in the final exam.

**Student Team Project.** Each student will be assigned to a small group (of approximately 5 students each) for the team project. The project will culminate in team presentations on the final class, but the intent is that the bulk of the preparation work for the presentation will be done in the classroom during four preceding classes. The student teams will meet for 50 minutes during each of these four classes (Weeks 8-11) for this purpose.

The team presentations will comprise recommendations and proposals for how to evaluate a single, major public policy initiative. Each team will be assigned such an initiative, their “project case” for the entire Part II of the course. During each class for Weeks 8–11, teams will discuss how the topics and methods highlighted in that week apply to the challenge of evaluating their project case, and why. (A possible point of view teams may take is that the specific methods for the week should NOT be used in evaluating their project case; they would then need to develop their reasoning as to why not, with some comments on recommended alternatives.)

During class, teams will develop their core ideas and recommendations in bullet points which will they will submit (in written form) at the end of class for feedback and grading. These bullet points are meant to form the core of the final team presentations. It is expected that student teams will need to work outside the classroom on the form and style of their presentation—preparing and polishing slides, organizing and practicing the oral presentation—but that the content will be basically supplied through the in-class work, without the need for further research.

There will be approximately 20 students, and exactly four student teams, in each subsection. Each team will have a different project case, but the project cases will have a common theme: Each will be policy initiatives for pre-K in a particular jurisdiction (jurisdictions ranging from North America to Europe to Brazil). Before Part II begins, teams will be given their project case assignment and a set of relevant readings. Selected, project case readings, the core for the team’s case, will be part of the required reading

for Week 8, but there will not be additional required project case readings for subsequent weeks. Instead, the packet of project case readings beyond the Week 8 assigned core should be seen as background information for teams (or individual team members) to dip into at their option as they develop their case recommendations.

Presentations will be strictly limited to 15 minutes, with 5 additional minutes for questions and comments.

## 10. COURSE OUTLINE

Preliminary and subject to change. Readings to follow.

- (1) Rubin Causal Model and What Is Rigorous Evaluation: Quantitative and Qualitative Methods
  - (a) A&P, Chapter 1
  - (b) Imbens, Guido and Donald Rubin. 2012. *Causal Inference in Statistics and Social Sciences*. Draft. Chapter 1, pp 1–22.
- (2) Randomized Controlled Trials, Matching, and Regression
  - (a) A&P, Chapter 2
  - (b) Angrist, Joshua, Daniel Lang, and Philip Oreopoulos. 2009. "Incentives and Services for College Achievement: Evidence From a Randomized Trial." *American Economic Journal: Applied Economics*.
  - (c) LaLonde, Robert (1986): "Evaluating the Econometric Evaluations of Training Programs with Experimental Data," *American Economic Review* 76, September, pp. 604-620.
  - (d) Dehejia, Rajeev, and Sadek Wahba (1999): "Causal Effects in Nonexperimental Studies: Re-evaluating the Evaluation of Training Programs," *JASA* 94.
- (3) Instrumental Variables
  - (a) A&P, Chapter 3
  - (b) J. Angrist, "Lifetime Earnings and the Vietnam Era Draft Lottery: Evidence from Social Security Administrative Records," *American Economic Review*, June 1990.
- (4) Regression Discontinuity and Interrupted Time Series
  - (a) A&P, Chapter 4
  - (b) A. Abdulkadiroglu, et al., "The Elite Illusion: Achievement Effects at Boston and New York Exam Schools," *Econometrica*, 2014.
- (5) Panel Data and Fixed Effects
  - (a) Kaushal, Neeraj, 2008. "In-State Tuition for the Undocumented: Education Effects on Mexican Young Adults." *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management* 27(4): pp. 771–792.
- (6) Difference-in-Differences, Meta-Analysis, and Review
  - (a) A&P, Chapter 5
  - (b) D. Card and A. Krueger, "Minimum Wages and Employment: A Case Study of the Fast Food Industry in New Jersey and Pennsylvania," *American Economic Review* 90 (1994), 1397-420.
  - (c) Card, David "The Impact of the Mariel Boatlift on the Miami Labor Market" *Industrial and Labor Relations Review*, 1990.
- (7) Midterm (February 24th)
- (8) Evaluation Design in Theory and Practice: Logic Models, Theories of Change and Multiple Types of Evaluation
  - (a) Weiss, C. (1995) 'Nothing as Practical as Good Theory: Exploring Theory-based Evaluation for Comprehensive Community Initiatives for Children and Families,' in J. P. Connell, A. C. Kubisch, L. B. Schorr and C. H. Weiss (eds) *New Approaches to Evaluating Community Initiatives: Volume 1, Concepts, Methods, and Contexts*. Washington, DC: The Aspen Institute.
  - (b) Treasury Board of Canada (2012). *Theory-Based Approaches to Evaluation: Concepts and Practices*.
  - (c) Patton, Michael Q. 2014. *Qualitative Research and Evaluation Methods*, 4th ed. Los Angeles: Sage. ISBN: 1412972124, pp 200-204.
  - (d) Four one-paragraph case summaries (posted on Blackboard), so you each know what the rest of the class is up to with the team projects.

- (e) One full country case reading per student team (see Blackboard for readings and team assignments).
- (9) Designing and Running Field Experiments
- (a) Rachel Glennerster and Kudzai Takavarasha (2013), *Running Randomized Evaluations: A Practical Guide* (Princeton University Press), Modules 1-3 of Chapter 5 and Modules 1-2 of Chapter 9: pp. 180-212, 386-398.
  - (b) Peter M. Nardi, *Doing Survey Research: A guide to Quantitative Methods* (Pearson 2003, 2006 and 2013), Chapter 4.
  - (c) *Case Reading*: Tama Leventhal and Brooks-Gunn, Jeanne, "Moving to opportunity: "An experimental study of neighborhood effects on mental health." *American Journal of Public Health*, Volume 93 No. 9, Sept 2003; pp. 1576 – 1582.
- (10) Designing and Conducting Qualitative Field Evaluations
- (a) Patton, Michael Q. 2014. *Qualitative Research and Evaluation Methods*, 4th ed. Los Angeles: Sage. ISBN: 1412972124, Modules 28-30, 32-33, 43-44, 58-59.
  - (b) Patton, M.Q. (2003) "Qualitative Evaluation Checklist" (Evaluation Checklist Project).
  - (c) *Case Reading*: Peltzer, J.N. and C.S. Teel (2012). The development of a comprehensive community health center in a rural community: A qualitative case study. *Leadership in Health Services*. 25(1).
- (11) Analyzing Qualitative and Mixed-Method Data
- (a) Patton, Michael Q. 2014. *Qualitative Research and Evaluation Methods*, 4th ed. Los Angeles: Sage. ISBN: 1412972124, Modules 41, 66-68, 76-77.
  - (b) Jick, T.D. (1979). "Mixing Qualitative and Quantitative Methods: Triangulation in Action". *Administrative Science Quarterly* 24 (4), 601-611.
  - (c) Golafshani, N. (2003). Understanding Reliability and Validity in Qualitative Research. *The Qualitative Report*. 8(4) 597-607.
  - (d) *Case Reading*: Seddon, Matthew (2015). The Alberta Family Wellness Initiative. SPPG Teaching Case (On Blackboard).
- (12) Evaluating Social Innovation
- (a) Preskill H. and Beer, T. (2012). Evaluating Social Innovation. FSG and Center for Evaluation Innovation.
  - (b) *Case Reading*: Scantlebury, Jordan (2015). Evaluating Interventions at the Frontiers of Innovation. SPPG Teaching Case (On Blackboard).

#### REFERENCES

Mueller, Pam A. and Daniel M. Oppenheimer. 2014. "The Pen Is Mightier Than the Keyboard: Advantages of Longhand Over Laptop Note Taking." *Psychological Science*:1–10.