

Description of Course Assignments

Adapted from PSYC*6840 course projects designed by J. Newberry and S. Lewis

OVERVIEW OF 3-PART PROGRAM EVALUATION PROJECT

Over the course of the term, you will be working in teams to develop a program evaluation *plan* in partnership with a community organization. You will apply knowledge from your readings and class discussions/exercises to develop an evaluation plan that can be used by your community partner. You will work with a community program/organization. In order to complete your project, you will need to arrange meetings with your organization/program (likely ~ 2-3 meetings over the term). You will want to organize your first meeting as soon as possible (this process always takes longer than anticipated).

Overview of Project Components & Due Dates

PE Project Part 1	25%	Due Feb 8, 2018
PE Project Part 2	25%	Due March 1 , 2018
PE Project Part 3	50%	Due Apr 3, 2017

All parts of the project should be submitted to CourseLink by 11:59pm by the due date.

PART 1: PROGRAM OVERVIEW 25%

Write a brief overview of your partner organization and the specific program for which you are designing a program evaluation plan. The overview should describe the items outlined below. Part 1 should be no more than 12 pages double-spaced. Please include all of the following when submitting Part 1:

- 1. Program/organization Description:** Describe the program's setting and general structure; including information about the organization itself (e.g., history, mission, location, etc.)
- 2. Program Purpose:** Articulate the goals/aims of the specific program. Beyond the program-specific goals, include an overview of program content/curriculum, any theoretical/empirical/practical basis for the program, and a brief explanation of how the program works (i.e., what is the program theory?).
- 3. Stakeholders:** Describe the program stakeholders. This includes those who are involved in the delivery of the program, who can make use of any evaluation results, AND who is directly served by the program (i.e., who benefits from it).
- 4. Evaluation Purpose & Proposed Evaluation Questions/Ideas:** Based on the program

purpose, please indicate why the organization is interested in evaluation and what questions should be addressed in the evaluation.

Assessment of Part 1

Program description = 5 pts

Program purpose & theory = 5 pts

Stakeholders = 5 pts

Evaluation questions = 5 pts

Grammar/Style = 5 pts

TOTAL = 25

PART 2: EXPLORATORY ASSESSMENT & PROGRAM LOGIC MODEL: 25%

Building on Part 1, Part 2 involves an overview of the needs of the program, an overview of the readiness of the program to be evaluated, and a detailed program logic model.

Please include all of the following when submitting Part 2:

1. Informal Needs Assessment (max 2 pages double-spaced): Outline the key needs of the program. This information can come from discussions/meetings with your community partner(s), consulting relevant literature, and becoming familiar with the program itself (e.g., politics, history, any program documents, etc.).

2. Informal Evaluability Assessment (max 2 pages double-spaced): Outline the extent to which the program is ready for evaluation. In your assessment, you can include (but are not limited to) information about the extent to which

- program goals are agreed upon (by relevant stakeholders) and realistic;
- program design is clear, capable of achieving intended outcomes, and consistent with research literature
- evaluation needs and goals are agreed upon (by relevant stakeholders) and realistic;
- evaluation data are obtainable (can provide specific examples of data that could be collected);
- intended users are willing and able to use evaluation information (can provide specific examples of how results may be used).

3. Program Logic Model: Create a logic model for your program. When submitting your PLM, submit both a diagram (generated in PowerPoint or some other program) and a text description. The text description should include a brief description of each component or 'box' on the logic model (e.g., inputs, activities, ST and LT outcomes, etc.). Use the alphanumeric labelling system shown in class to match the diagram and text description. The text description should also include the validity assumptions (i.e., the causal assumptions for each 'arrow' in the model).

Assessment of Part 2

Informal Needs Assessment = 5 pts

Informal Evaluability Assessment = 5 pts

Program Logic Model = 12 pts

Grammar/Style = 3 pts

TOTAL = 25 pts

PART 3: EVALUATION PLAN: 50%

You will develop and describe a plan for conducting an outcome evaluation, with consideration of key process-related issues. The evaluation plan includes delineating the outcome objectives, design, measures, data collection, and analysis that will be used in the outcome evaluation of your program. Your outcome evaluation plan should articulate how you will determine that desired change(s) are attributable to the program (and its components) and/or how you will interpret/account for a lack of change (no desired changes) or unanticipated changes.

Please include all of the following when submitting Part 3:

1. An updated program logic model

You will likely make some adjustments to your PLM based on feedback and an evolving understanding of the program and the evaluation, so please submit an updated PLM with Part 3. Note: The updated PLM will not be marked individually as part of this final assignment. However, edits to the PLM will be considered in assessing the “overall coherence” of the plan.

2. Evaluation Questions:

Identify the specific evaluation questions that will be addressed through your evaluation, drawing clearly on your program logic model, evaluability assessment, and intended uses. Your questions are likely to explore both process and outcome issues. To keep the assignment manageable, and depending on the size and complexity of your program you do not need to plan to evaluate *every* outcome identified in your logic model, but please address a minimum of 3 outcomes (ST or LT) in your evaluation questions. When describing your prioritized outcomes, remember to operationalize the concepts embedded in the outcomes. Explain how and why these evaluation questions will generate answers that are not simply academically interesting, but useful to the program in a practical way.

3. Evaluation Framework Table, with columns for:

- a) *Outcome Objective* (i.e., the short/intermediate/long term outcomes from your PLM).
- b) *Evaluation Questions* (i.e., the primary outcome questions for each objective/outcome).

You should also consider other relevant questions, including those pertinent to:

- a. process questions associated with key outcomes
- b. outcomes linked to specific groups
- c. concept clarification about outcomes
- d. outcomes that are quality-focused
- e. how outcomes are achieved (or are not achieved) and why

You are not required to address each and every one of these additional questions for each outcome objective. *They are subject to how relevant they are to your prioritized outcomes and your program and should be carefully considered in relation to program theory and how to promote useful evaluation and program improvement.*

- c) *Indicators* (i.e., the data required to answer your outcome evaluation questions).
- d) *Measures and Tools* (i.e., the measures used to collect indicator data).
- e) *Data Sources* (i.e., where will you get the information, when, and who will collect it?).

These will be brief statements about your PE design, which will be elaborated on in other sections.

4. Evaluation Design, which includes:

- a) A more detailed description of the measures and tools of assessment (qualitative or quantitative) identified in your evaluation framework table. Describe the measure or tool and how it purports to measure or assess the indicators corresponding to your prioritized outcomes. Please include relevant information, such as:
 - I. Is it an existing measure/tool or one customized/developed for your evaluation?
 - II. Outline how you would go about developing a new measure/tool if one does not exist for your indicator ****you do not need to actually develop a new tool for this project**
 - III. If appropriate, how will the measure be scored? Psychometrics? (reliability/validity)?

If possible, please provide any existing measures that are included in your design as an appendix

- b) A description of the details of your design as they apply to each measure (e.g., who administers and completes the measure/tool, is there a control/comparison group, the timing of administration in relation to the program, plans for ensuring the quality/accuracy of the measure/tool and data)
- c) A brief description of data management procedures (e.g, storage)
- d) An overall design timeframe (as a figure or table)

5. Analysis and Interpretation

Explain how you will answer your outcome evaluation questions (i.e, how will you evaluate your prioritized outcomes?). This section should include:

- a) A description of the analyses that will be conducted
- b) A description of how you will interpret your data and what constitutes success
- c) A short description of how you expect your findings could be presented and used
- d) The major threats to validity and how your PE design and/or plan for analysis addresses them.

6. Ethical Considerations: Outline the ethical issues that pertain to conducting an evaluation of your program and explain how consideration of these issues has informed your evaluation design.

7. Executive Summary: Create a half-page summary of your evaluation plan designed to be read by a senior manager at the organization running the program. This summary should highlight how the evaluation will be helpful to the organization and what will be required to carry the evaluation out. NOTE: You are not expected to develop a detailed evaluation workplan or budget as part of your evaluation plan. The executive summary should simply provide a high level summary of the kinds of tasks required to implement the evaluation plan.

Assessment of Part 3

Evaluation Questions = 4 pts

Evaluation Framework Table = 10 pts

Evaluation Design = 10 pts

Analysis and Interpretation = 10 pts

Ethical Considerations = 4 pts

Executive Summary = 5 pts

Overall Coherence of Plan (i.e., degree to which different sections align logically; degree of focus) = 4 pts

Grammar/Style = 3 pts

TOTAL = 50 pts