ALEC 623 – Survey of Evaluation Strategies for Agriculture

Course Description: This course is designed to pull together theory, concepts, and strategies to give students a broad understanding of the fundamentals of evaluation and to arm students with the knowledge and skills necessary to design and administer appropriate and effective evaluations. Prerequisite: Graduate classification.

Learning Outcomes:
The emphasis throughout the course will be gaining an awareness and understanding of effective evaluation strategies for use across agricultural disciplines. Specific outcomes of the course are for students to be able to:
1. Recognize and understand theories that can assist in designing evaluations.
2. Understand strategies that can be employed to conduct effective evaluations.
3. Understand the evaluation cycle and data sources.
4. Know methods of designing, developing, and implementing evaluations.
5. Recognize the importance of logic models.
6. Identify checklists that can be used to increase efficiency and effectiveness.

Instructor Information:
Dr. Theresa Murphrey
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Office Hours: by appointment

Location & Time: Course will be delivered Online


Recommended Resources:

Grading:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class Participation</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Discussion Board Postings, Online Meetings, Etc.)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit Quizzes (12)</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vocabulary Quizzes (10)</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reflection Logs (13)</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Presentation (1)</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reaction Papers (2)</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Examination</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100%</td>
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A ----90 -100%, B ----80 - 89%, C --- 70 - 79%, D --- 60 - 69%, F --- below 60%
Schedule/Outline:
Each week students are responsible for completing the following:
1.) Unit Lectures & Support Materials [listen/read online] (eCampus: Materials)
2.) Unit Activities (eCampus: Discussions)
3.) Unit Quizzes (eCampus: Assessments)
4.) Submission of Appropriate Assignments (eCampus: Assignments)

Each week's unit will become available in Vista [http://elearning.tamu.edu/](http://elearning.tamu.edu/) on **Monday evening** (i.e. Unit 1 – Monday - Aug 26, Unit 2 - Monday – Sept 2, etc.) and you will have until the **following Monday at 11:00 P.M.** to complete the unit, quizzes, and turn-in all the assignments in Vista.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WEEK:</th>
<th>UNIT:</th>
<th>TEXTBOOK READING ASSIGNMENTS:</th>
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| Aug 26 | Unit 1: Introduction & Overview | Ch. 1: What is Evaluation?  
Ch. 2: Defining the Purpose of the Evaluation |
|       | Due Sept 2 |  
- Team Selection  
- Lecture/Reading Quiz 1 (Q01)  
- Vocabulary Quiz 1 (V01)  
- Updated Reflection Log (L01) |
| Sept 2 | Unit 2: Evaluator Competencies | Ch. 3: Identifying Evaluative Criteria |
|       | Due Sept 9 |  
- Lecture/Reading Quiz (Q02)  
- Vocabulary Quiz 2 (V02)  
- Updated Reflection Log (L02) |
| Sept 9 | Unit 3: Evaluation Models – Part 1 | Ch. 4: Organizing the Criteria and Identifying Potential Sources of Evidence |
|       | Due Sept 16 |  
- Lecture/Reading Quiz (Q03)  
- Vocabulary Quiz 3 (V03)  
- Updated Reflection Log (L03) |
| Sept 16 | Unit 4: Evaluation Models – Part 2 | Ch. 5: Dealing with the Causation Issue |
|        | Due Sept 23 |  
- Team Presentation #1 will be presented during the week of Sept 23rd. PowerPoint file is due Sept 23rd for the team presenting.  
- Lecture/Reading Quiz (Q04)  
- Vocabulary Quiz 4 (V04)  
- Updated Reflection Log (L04) |
| Sept 23 | Unit 5: Logic Models | No Textbook Reading Assignment |
|        | Due Sept 30 |  
- Reaction to Team Presentation #1  
- Lecture/Reading Quiz (Q05)  
- Vocabulary Quiz 5 (V05)  
- Updated Reflection Log (L05) |
| Sept 30 | Unit 6: Understanding Data | Ch. 6: “Values” in Evaluation |
|        | Due Oct 7 |  
- Team Presentation #2 will be presented during the week of Oct 7th. PowerPoint file is due Oct 7th for the team presenting.  
- Lecture/Reading Quiz (Q06)  
- Vocabulary Quiz 6 (V06) |
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Oct 7</th>
<th><strong>Unit 7: Recognizing the Need/Request for an Evaluation</strong></th>
<th>Ch. 7: Determining Importance</th>
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| Due Oct 14 | - Reaction to Team Presentation #2  
- Lecture/Reading Quiz (Q07)  
- Vocabulary Quiz 7 (V07)  
- Updated Reflection Log (L07) |                          |
| **Unit 8: The Role of Technology in Evaluation** | Ch. 8: The Merit Determination Step |
| Due Oct 21 | - Lecture/Reading Quiz (Q08)  
- Vocabulary Quiz 8 (V08)  
- Updated Reflection Log (L08) |                          |
| **Unit 9: Evaluation Checklists** | Ch. 9: Synthesis Methodology |
| Due Oct 28 | - Lecture/Reading Quiz (Q09)  
- Vocabulary Quiz 9 (V09)  
- Updated Reflection Log (L09) |                          |
| **Unit 10: Documentation of an Evaluation** | Ch. 10: Putting It All Together |
| Due Nov 4 | - Team Presentation #3 will be presented during the week of Nov. 4th. PowerPoint file is due Nov. 4th for the team presenting.  
- Lecture/Reading Quiz (Q10)  
- Vocabulary Quiz 10 (V10)  
- Updated Reflection Log (L10) |                          |
| **Unit 11: Implications of Evaluations** | Ch. 11: Meta-evaluation |
| Due Nov 11 | - Reaction to Team Presentation #3  
- Lecture/Reading Quiz (Q11)  
- Updated Reflection Log (L11) |                          |
| **Unit 12: The Evaluation Process** | No Textbook Reading Assignment |
| Due Nov 18 | - Lecture/Reading Quiz (Q12)  
- Updated Reflection Log (L12) |                          |
| **Unit 13: Summary & Final Comments** | No Textbook Reading Assignment |
| Due Nov 25 | - Updated Reflection Log (L13) |                          |
| **Unit 14:** No unit this week - time allotted for final exam | No Textbook Reading Assignment |

* Course announcements will be posted each week on Monday by 11:00pm to guide you through the course.  
** Unit Quizzes and Discussion Board Participation are not listed. Remember to complete your unit quiz and participate in the discussion postings each week.  
*** All Chapters refer to your text Evaluation Methodology Basics: The nuts and bolts of sound evaluation by E. J. Davidson.

Late Work and Make up Policy
The course deadlines are clearly stated above – be sure to print this to help you stay on track. The only deadline to be determined is the presentation deadline. You will sign up for a date to present during the first few weeks of class. Late work will follow university rules. See University Rules regarding attendance at URL http://student-rules.tamu.edu/rule07

**CLASS PARTICIPATION (10%)**
Everyone is expected to participate in discussion postings via the online classroom and the LIVE class meetings via Centra.

**a. Discussion postings via Vista:**
Throughout the course, you will be asked to post your thoughts to the class discussion board at various times. While I will not be “counting” the number of individual postings, I will be reviewing your posts throughout the class and will assess your participation on the quality of information shared with the class.

I expect a minimum of one post per discussion topic from each student. There will be times that you can contribute more or less than others. If you feel that you do not have anything to contribute to a particular topic, you should contribute to the discussion by posting a question. You may respond to either my initial posting or to your fellow student postings.

Some discussion board posting are used to encourage dialogue between and among fellow students – I encourage you to make use of this medium.

**b. LIVE class meetings via TTVN WebMeeting:**
TTVN WebMeeting, an online conferencing system, will be used throughout the course for online class meetings. Access is free but you must have a microphone in order to participate.

The LIVE online meetings will be recorded for those who are unable to attend. **If you are unable to attend a LIVE session, you will be allowed to listen/view the recorded session and submit a 1-page single-spaced summary of the topics shared during the session.**

**VERY IMPORTANT:** You need to verify your connectability prior to the first connection. To verify your connectability follow the instructions in the Getting Started Section located on the course homepage. If you need assistance please contact me and I will be happy to set up a connection with you.

**UNIT QUIZZES (10%)**
There will be 12 quizzes to reinforce learning and to test your knowledge of the content being covered. You are allowed to take each quiz two times (The highest grade will be recorded). I encourage you to review the material before taking the quiz. The quizzes will count as 10% of your course grade. Each Unit Quiz will cover your Online Unit Material and Textbook Readings. Each quiz must be completed in Vista “Assessments” by at the end of each week’s Unit on Monday by 11:00 P.M.

**VOCABULARY QUIZZES (10%)**
There will be 10 vocabulary quizzes to help you become familiar with the language of evaluation. The vocabulary for these quizzes will come primarily from the glossary of your textbook. You are allowed to take each quiz two times (The highest grade will be recorded). You can refer to your textbook and course materials during the quiz, however, only a very limited amount of time is allowed for each quiz. It is HIGHLY RECOMMENDED that you familiarize yourself with the vocabulary terms before taking the quiz, since it will be almost impossible to look up every term during the quiz. Each week approximately 20 Evaluation Vocabulary Words will be featured -- the vocabulary quiz for that week will cover these words and the words from the previous week. All words will be covered by the end of the sixth vocabulary quiz. Vocabulary quizzes V07, V08, V09, and V10 will include the entire list of vocabulary and will be randomly generated. Each quiz must be completed in Vista “Assessments” by at the end of each week’s Unit on Monday by 11:00 P.M.

**REFLECTION LOG (15%)**
We will use the Reflection Log Assignment as a journal on eCampus. This is a very simple process; you will add journal entries to your reflection log each week.

You will be adding notes to this journal throughout the semester and will be submitting it to me weekly for review. During the Unit audio lectures, I will be asking you to "pause" the lecture to answer
questions, give me examples, etc.; you will enter your responses into your journal. You will also be asked to reflect on textbook readings, the case presentations, and other pertinent material.

Your responses are not expected to be extremely long but should address the questions presented. As you compose your reflection, remember that there is not a "right" or "wrong" response. I am looking for your thoughts and ideas.

Please begin each "journal log" entry with an appropriate unit number (i.e., Unit 01 Reflection Log, Unit 02 Reflection Log, etc.), this will help to keep the entries separated and will serve as a reference point to refer back to later in the course. The Reflection Log journal entries will count as 10% of your course grade.

PRESENTATION (15%)
Each student will signup for a presentation team at the beginning of the course to present a short overview of a case study focused on evaluation and lead the class in discussion. The purpose of the "Presentation" is to provide a connection between course content and real-world application. The presentations will take place LIVE online using Centra. More information regarding the scope and format of the Presentation will be discussed in class.

REACTION PAPERS (20%)
Each student will submit reaction papers for the 2 team presentations that they are not a part of presenting. Submissions should be approximately 1 ½ page single–spaced and include the following: a) a summary of the main points, b) the most important concepts you learned, and c) your overall reaction to the case presented.

FINAL EXAMINATION (20%)
The final exam will be an open-book test that includes knowledge and application questions.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Policy Statement
"The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact Disability Services, in Cain Hall, Room B118, or call 845-1637. For additional information visit http://disability.tamu.edu"

Aggie Honor Code:
"An aggie does not lie, cheat or steal, or tolerate those who do."
Learn more about the Honor Code at http://aggiehonor.tamu.edu