

UEP Policy and Planning Competency Grid

Course Name/Number: Program Evaluation – UEP 256 Instructor: Marji Erickson Warfield Semester: Spring 2009

a) Knowledge Competencies	Specific sub-competencies or examples as developed in this course
1. History, structure, function of urban and metropolitan settlements	
2. Economic influences on policy and planning (e.g. 'market' and 'polis' relationships)	Minor focus in terms of how policy can be shaped by findings from economic evaluations – both cost-benefit and cost-effectiveness analyses
3. Environmental, social and cultural influences on policy and planning	Moderate focus. In the beginning of the semester we do a session where we read three short articles from common news outlets that describe a solution or decision and ask – What is the problem? We discuss how solutions get driven by how social values and perceptions drive what solution is developed. Then we go backwards and ask; given this problem, what are a range of solutions that could be developed?
4. Understanding different roles in policy and planning	Moderate focus. We discuss items I through IV below in terms of how evaluations incorporate or involve these groups as stakeholders.
i) Levels of government	
ii) Governance structures	
iii) Citizens and residents	
iv) NGOs	
5. History, theory and processes of policymaking	Minor focus. We discuss how evaluation results have been used (and in some cases over used) in the process of policymaking and how evaluation can play a role in future policymaking.
6. History, theory and process of planning	

7. Implementation of policy and planning	Major focus. We discuss, review, and develop evaluations that ask and address implementation questions for programs that are developed or supported by different policies. This happens in small group tasks and whole class discussions
8. Evaluation of policy and planning	Minor focus. The evaluation emphasis is more on programs developed from more general policies rather than evaluation of the policy
9. Administrative and legal aspects of policy	
10. Administrative and legal aspects of planning	
11. Politics of policy and planning	Minor emphasis. We discuss as a class and in small group exercises how evaluation results are used and mis-used in the political process

b) Skills Competencies	Specific sub-competencies or examples as developed in this course
1. Critical thinking i) Defining problem	Major focus. Defining the problem drives how programs are developed and implemented to address the problem and how the program is evaluated. The students are required to do a series of three papers that lead to the development of an evaluation plan. The first paper describes the program they will develop the evaluation plan for and asks them to define the problem the program seeks to address. We also do an in-class exercise on this.
ii) Documenting the extent of a problem	Major focus. We discuss needs assessments which involve documenting the problem on several different dimensions. The students need to include some documentation of the size, extent, location of the problem in their first paper and in class exercises.
iii) Documenting the political and social context	Minor focus. We discuss and the students develop logic models that picture the operation of a program within in political and social context. This is part of the first paper students write and a focus on an in-class exercise
iv) Documenting the environmental and spatial context	
v) Identifying possible analysis strategies and their implications	Moderate focus. We discuss how evaluation questions are developed and analyzed from a conceptual standpoint. The analysis strategies do not cover statistical methods. In their evaluation plan, the students need to outline how they would compare and contrast their key variables in order to address their evaluation questions.

vi) Identifying criteria for proposing solutions	
vii) Identifying criteria for selecting solutions	
viii) Evaluating the development and results of policies and plans	More a focus on evaluating the development, implementation, and outcomes of programs.
2. Research skills	
i) Understanding research design	Moderate focus. We review different types of research designs and how to develop an appropriate design for an evaluation based on a number of criteria. We discuss the designed used by the evaluation studies we read. The students must propose a design and defend it in their evaluation plan.
ii) Collecting relevant literature	
iii) Analyzing relevant literature	Moderate focus. The students work in small groups to analyze journal articles that are examples of different types of evaluation studies. For example, in one class the students will divide into three groups to focus on one of three different outcome evaluations (student get to choose the article most aligned with their area of interest). Each evaluation will be assessed on how well it meets the criteria for an outcome evaluation based on several dimensions. The groups present their findings to the rest of the class and we discuss.
iv) Identifying and assessing data sources and limitations	Moderate focus. We discuss where data come from and its reliability and validity. We discuss when existing data can be used in an evaluation study and its strengths and limitations. In class exercises and the paper assignment cover these issues.
v) Developing data collection instruments and tools	Heavy focus. We discuss how you move from an abstract construct to an empirical measure; we review instruments used in real life evaluations and how they were developed, piloted, and refined; the students develop their own data collection tool as the focus of the second paper.
3. Data Analysis skills	
i) Interpreting and synthesizing data	Heavy focus. Done through reading evaluations, in-class exercises, and proposing an analysis plan in the final paper.
ii) Drawing inferences from specific observations to make	Moderate focus – we spend a class on how to use observations to measure behavior and the challenges in doing that in a reliable and valid way
iii) More generalizable findings	Moderate focus. Through their paper assignment and through the evaluation studies we assess, we discuss how the findings can, and cannot be generalized beyond the setting where they occurred.

iv) Comparative analysis	Minor focus. We compare and contrast different types of needs assessments, process and implementation evaluations, outcome evaluations and efficient evaluations
v) Longitudinal analysis	Minor focus. We discuss longitudinal data as an aspect of research design and how it can be part of different evaluation plans. We do not discuss specific strategies for analyzing longitudinal data.
vi) Recognizing and accounting for limitations to findings	Moderate focus. We discuss the limitations of each evaluation study we discuss either as a class or in small groups
4. Qualitative Analysis skills	
i) Direct observation	
ii) Analysis of primary qualitative data	
iii) Analysis of secondary qualitative data	
5. Quantitative Analysis skills	
i) Descriptive statistics	Minor – we discuss the results of the evaluation studies we read where descriptive statistics are presented.
ii) Inferential statistics	Minor – we discuss the results of the evaluation studies we read where inferential statistics are presented.
iii) Basic forecasting	
iv) Use of spreadsheets and statistical software	
6. Spatial Analysis skills	
i) Understand how to identify spatial problems and frame spatial questions for analysis and research	
ii) Use Geographic Information System for basic spatial analysis and mapping	
7. Communication skills	
i) Writing skills	Major focus. Students write a series of three papers with the final one being a full evaluation plan. The first two papers lead up to the third. The comments the students receive from the

	<p>first two papers can be incorporated into their final paper. They also have the option in their final paper to write a one page summary of how they have modified their paper in response to the comments. This is similar to what one needs to do when you are re-submitting a grant application to the federal government.</p>
ii) Speaking skills	<p>Moderate focus. Each student must make 10 minute oral presentation to the class outlining their evaluation plan. Each student is also assigned as a discussant for another student's presentation in which they must ask the student a question about the evaluation plan they presented.</p>
iii) Graphic presentation skills	
iv) Presentation strategies and methods	

c) Policy and Planning in Practice Competencies	Specific sub-competencies or examples as developed in this course
1. Collaboration skills i) Negotiation	
ii) Group project management	
iii) Group problem solving	Moderate focus. There are several in-class small group exercises where students need to complete a task using the information and/or skills just presented to the whole class. This involves problem solving in how to apply knowledge to a specific task.
iv) Perspective-taking	
v) Adaptability, flexibility	
vi) Networking	
2. Organizational management skills i) Decision making	
ii) Strategic problem solving and adapting to change	
iii) Human resource development	
iv) Financial management and resource development	
3. Political and economic power mapping skills i) Understanding political and economic power structures and dynamics	
ii) Modes of influencing their use	

4. Ethical and professional behavior skills

i) Understanding and upholding the role of ethics and accountability in professional policy and planning processes, practices, and behavior

Minor focus. We discuss ethical standards in evaluation and the use of the IRB to maintain those standards.