

CGU School of Social Science, Policy & Evaluation
CGU Department of Politics and Government
PP 331. Policy Evaluation: Research Design to Solve Real Problems
Wednesdays, 4:00-6:50 PM. Stauffer 106. Spring, 2019

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Course description

This course is about real-world problems, and, more specifically, about the policies and programs proposed to solve those problems and the advantages and practical limitations of research designs implemented to evaluate the success or failure of those policies and programs. It presents tools for designing and analyzing implementation and impact evaluations from the perspective of the evaluator.

From income and wealth inequality to environmental disasters and health disparities—social problems are big and, in many cases, increasing. Federal, state and local governments as well as non-profit and many other community-oriented organizations—that is, the institutional problem-solvers—are incessantly struggling for resources. Policies and programs need, therefore, to be effective and efficient. This course is designed to improve the problem-solving, analytic skills of students pursuing to apply their academic and professional abilities to the overall improvement of the population’s wellbeing.

This course will expose students to a great variety of research designs and methodological tools to evaluate the implementation of programs and their impact on the communities they intend to serve. Students will learn about key qualitative methods for data collection and analysis—like focus groups, surveys, and interviews—as well as designs based on quantitative assessment—experimental, quasi-experimental, and non-experimental. One central goal of this course is to provide students with an overall instruction on statistical techniques for impact and outcome evaluation of programs.

By the end of this course, students will have a sound understanding of how to use evidence in decision-making, adequately collect, analyze, and interpret qualitative, experimental and statistical data to improve or expand existing policies and programs, and effectively communicate evaluation results to policy-makers, stakeholders, and non-expert audiences. To achieve this goal, we will examine a great variety of cases covering policy and program areas like health, education, the environment, poverty, criminal justice, and development. In general terms, we will study the policies and programs that affect the political and social determinants of health, development and overall population wellbeing.

Class format, course requirements, and grading

The focus of this course is the thinking, understanding, and craft of research design strategies to evaluate the policies and programs that attempt to alleviate real-world problems. Research design is the glue that holds together all parts of the evaluation process. Research design encompasses the coherent integration of all components of a policy or program evaluation— context, the research problem, the nature of the intervention, the community the program intends to serve, methods for data collection, and measurement, analysis, and interpretation of data for decision-making. Accordingly, this course involves reading, examination of real-world cases, training exercises, hands-on data analysis, and report writing. For that purpose, we will usually meet for lecture in the classroom, but some other times we will meet in a computer lab. Separate data analytic sessions will be offered, as well. Our statistical software of preference will be Stata (which is well-known in the industry and government agencies for being an intuitive, easy-to-use statistical software, and it is available to students at no cost in all CGU computers). Students will be evaluated via classwork and homework (10% of the course grade), three mini-projects (20%), a midterm (15%) and a final exam (20%), and a maxi-project (35%).

1. Classwork and homework (10%).

- a. Classwork: Individual- or group-developed in-class exercises.
- b. Homework: Students will complete exercises that reaffirm or expand ideas from class. (For homework due dates see our schedule below.)

2. Three mini-projects (20%).

- Each mini-project consists of a real-world training exercise. For instance, students will write evaluation reports based on qualitative and/or quantitative exercises— e.g., a focus group, a survey design, or a statistical analysis for quantification of policy/program effects.
- For each mini-project, students will write a report of roughly 4 pages. Students can collaborate with other students, but they will have to submit their own write-up for credit. No write-up should look similar to another one; students should make their own, independent analysis of the problem under study.
- Students will also generate Power Point slides of their mini-projects and deliver a 5-minute presentation, which will be followed by a 5-minute feedback and Q&A section. (For mini-projects and presentations due dates see our schedule below.)

3. Midterm exam (15%).

An open-book exam, in the classroom, on March 13, 2019. This midterm exam will include multiple choice and open-ended questions, both conceptual and methodological. It will also ask the student to elaborate on key evaluation tools, like logic models, research design decisions, appropriate data collection mechanisms, and many others.

4. Final exam (20%).

An open-book exam, in the classroom, on May 15, 2019. It will follow a format similar to the midterm exam; however, in the most important component of the final exam,

students will be asked to design a program evaluation for a given scenario, including data-driven decision-making for policy prescription and program upscaling.

5. Maxi-project (35%).

- The maxi-project is the *most important* evaluation criteria for the course.
- Students will be given a real-world scenario and they will develop a research design and carry out an impact evaluation of the program under consideration. The maxi-project will be due on May 1, 2019.
- Students will write an evaluation report of roughly 8 pages. Students will collaborate with other students on this maxi-project, and they will submit a single, coauthored report for credit.
- Student groups will also generate Power Point slides of their evaluation and will deliver a full presentation in class (20-minute presentation and 10-minute Q&A).

Required texts, course requirements, and assignments

No textbook has been assigned for this course. As you may have already noticed, some authors are good at explaining some materials, other authors others. We are, after all, humans. Our approach is therefore eclectic: All reading assignments comprise a collection or articles and book chapters that exemplify the very best of each author’s writing. To make things easy for you, all reading assignments are available either online or through our library system. *Be sure to be logged into your CGU library account when clicking on the hyperlinks.*

Date	Topic	Reading and class activity	Assignment due
Jan 23 Class1	Class introduction. Defining problems. (Class will meet in the classroom .)	No assignments are due. <u>Class</u> In this class, the professor will provide: ○ An overview of the class and its format. ○ An overall assessment of students’ baseline level of training on the methodological tools necessary for policy and program evaluation. ○ An introduction to, and review of, general concepts and ideas in policy analysis and program evaluation. ○ Defining and understanding problems. ○ Some food for thought and data visualizations of key patterns related to the social problems we will examine during the semester, and the ones that represent the context in which policies and programs are prescribed, implemented, and evaluated.	N/A.
Jan 30 Class2	Implementation evaluation and Qualitative methods 1. Logic models.	<u>Class</u> ○ This class will introduce implementation or process evaluation. ○ We will focus on a key tool: logic models (conceptual mapping).	- Hwk 1: Defining problems.

	(Class will meet in the classroom.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ We will begin to get used to the reality that programs and policies are processes. ○ Examination of cases, and some of the various uses of logic models. ○ Class activity: Logic models. <p><u>Assigned readings</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ McLaughlin and Jordan. "Using logic models." Chapter 3, in Newcomer et al., 2015, <i>Handbook of practical program evaluation</i>. ○ W. K. Kellogg Foundation. "Introduction to logic models." Chapter 1, in W. K. Kellogg Foundation, 2004, <i>Logic model development guide</i>. ○ Gienapp et al., 2009. "Getting started: A self-directed guide to outcome map development." ○ Sundra et al., 2006. "Using Concept Mapping to Develop a Logic Model for the Prevention Research Centers Program." 	
Feb 6 Class3	Implementation evaluation and Qualitative methods 2. (Class will meet in the classroom.)	<p><u>Class</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ This class will introduce the focus group as a mechanism to gain insight on problems; perceptions, feelings and ideas; policy content, and implementation. ○ We will also look at working mechanisms for organizing, presenting, and using focus group data in decision-making. ○ Examination of cases. ○ Class activity: Focus groups. <p><u>Assigned readings</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Stockdale, M.S., 2002. "Analyzing Focus Group Data with Spreadsheets." <i>American Journal of Health Studies</i> 18(1): 55-60. ○ Krueger and Casey. "Focus group interviewing." Chapter 20, in Newcomer et al., 2015, <i>Handbook of practical program evaluation</i>. ○ Onwuegbuzie et al., 2009. "A qualitative framework for collecting and analyzing data in focus group research." <i>International journal of qualitative methods</i>. ○ Deliens et al., 2014. "Determinants of eating behavior in university students: A qualitative study using focus group discussions." <i>BMC Public Health</i>. ○ Moise and Mulhall, 2016. "Providers' perspectives on case management of a healthy start program: A qualitative study." <i>Plos One</i>. 	- Hwk 2: Logic models.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Video: "Moderating Focus Groups." Prepared by Richard Krueger, University of Minnesota. 	
Feb 13 Class4	<p>Implementation evaluation and Qualitative methods 3.</p> <p>(Class will meet in the classroom.)</p>	<p><u>Class</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o We will introduce the in-depth interview, and how to use data collected through interviews to "tell the evaluation story." o In this class we will start to shift gears from qualitative to quantitative analytics. o We will introduce surveys and sampling techniques; for example, sampling hard-to-reach communities. o We will also talk about some issues like selection and attrition. o Examination of cases. o Class activity: Interviews. <p><u>Assigned readings</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Krueger, Richard. "Using stories in evaluation." Chapter 21, in Newcomer et al., 2015, <i>Handbook of practical program evaluation</i>. o Thomas, D.R. 2006. "A General Inductive Approach for Analyzing Qualitative Evaluation Data." <i>American Journal of Evaluation</i>. o Sukop et al., 2007. "Storytelling Approaches to Program Evaluation". The California Endowment. o Popkin et al., 2008. "Girls in the 'Hood: The Importance of Feeling Safe." The Urban Institute. o Newcomer and Triplett. "Using surveys." Chapter 14, in Newcomer et al., 2015, <i>Handbook of practical program evaluation</i>. o Johnson, Gail. 2014. <i>Research methods for public administrators</i>. Chapter 10: "Sampling demystified." 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mini-project 1, 5-page report: Focus groups. - Power Point presentation of mini-project results.
Feb 20 Class5	<p>Implementation evaluation and Qualitative methods 4.</p> <p>(Class will meet in the computer lab.)</p>	<p><u>Class</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o In this class we will dive into questionnaire construction, measurement, scales and scaling, and program-specific survey data. o We will also continue talking about surveys and we will embark in our first data analytic training. o We will talk about the definition and meaning of coefficients of interest, data visualization, and descriptive policy implications. o Examination of cases. o Class activity: Questionnaire design. 	Note: TA session (TBD)

		<p>Assigned readings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Cook et al. "Recruitment and retention of study participants." Chapter 9, in Newcomer et al., 2015, <i>Handbook of practical program evaluation</i>. o Johnson, Gail. 2014. <i>Research methods for public administrators</i>. Chapters 4 and 13: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ch4: "Identifying measures and measurement strategy." - Ch13: "Analyzing survey scales." o Fowler, J. 2009. <i>Survey Research Methods</i>. Chapter 5, 6, and 7: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ch5: "Methods of data collection." - Ch6: "Designing questions to be good measures." - Ch7: "Evaluating survey questions and instruments." 	
Feb 27 Class6	<p>Survey data analysis 1. (Class will meet in the computer lab.)</p>	<p><u>Class</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o In this class we will continue our survey data analytic training. We will begin to think in statistical terms, and use statistical output and visualizations for decision-making and policy-prescription. o We will also initiate a conversation about key modeling considerations like variable transformations, polynomial modeling, multi-level data amplification, sub-group analysis and fixed effects, and interactions. o Examination of cases. o Class activity: Survey data analysis for policy analysis. <p>Assigned readings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Newcomer and Conger. "Using statistics in evaluation." Chapter 23, in Newcomer et al., 2015, <i>Handbook of practical program evaluation</i>. o Fowler, J. 2009. <i>Survey Research Methods</i>. Chapters 9 and 10: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ch9: "Preparing survey data for analysis." - Ch10: "Analyzing survey data." o Johnson, Gail. 2014. <i>Research methods for public administrators</i>. Chapters 14 and 15: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ch14: "Data Analysis." - Ch15: "Data analysis: Regression." 	<p>- Hwk 3: Surveys.</p> <p>Note: TA session (TBD)</p>
Mar 6 Class7	<p>Survey data analysis 2. (Class will meet in the computer lab.)</p>	<p><u>Class</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o In this class we will move forward and initiate multiple regression analysis using survey data. 	<p>- Mini-project 2, 5-page report: Survey data analysis.</p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ We will talk about statistical control, coefficients with evaluative and policy relevance, modeling with a purpose, statistical decision-making, and interpretation of results for policy prescription and improvement of programs. ○ We will also talk about key considerations when running multiple regressions with survey data, including robust estimation, clustering, survey complex designs, and sample weights. ○ Examination of cases. ○ Class activity: Survey multivariate data analysis. <p><u>Assigned readings</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Alexopolous, E. C. 2010. "Introduction to multivariate regression analysis." ○ Linnan et al., 2008. "Results of the 2004 National Worksite Health Promotion Survey." <i>AJPH</i> ○ Erguder et al., 2008. "Evaluation of the use of Global Youth Tobacco Survey (GYTS) data for developing evidence-based tobacco control policies in Turkey." <i>BMC Public Health.</i> ○ Trenholm et al., 2007. "Impacts of four Title V, section 510 abstinence education programs." <i>Mathematica Policy Research.</i> [This report is available on Canvas.] 	<p>- Power Point presentation of mini-project results.</p> <p>Note: TA session (TBD)</p>
Mar 13	Midterm exam. (We will meet in the computer lab.)	Midterm exam.	Midterm Exam
Mar 20	Spring break. No class.	Spring break. No class.	Spring break. No class.
Mar 27 Class8	Impact evaluation. (Class will meet in the classroom.)	<p><u>Class</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ In this class we will officially transition to research designs involving quantitative methodologies for policy analysis and program evaluation. ○ We will wrap up the first part of the course dedicated to key methodological tools used in research designs for implementation evaluation and start studying impact evaluation. ○ To adequately make this transition, we will review all the principles outlined in your Midterm Examination. ○ Examination of cases. <p><u>Assigned readings</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ No reading assignments for this class. 	No homework.

Apr 3 Class9	Impact evaluation and quasi-experimental design 1. (Class will meet in the classroom .)	<p><u>Class</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ In this class we will talk about the theory behind the experimental design and will transition into the quasi-experimental design. ○ We will cover comparison group designs, comparison group credibility, baseline equivalence, techniques like propensity scores and matching. <p><u>Assigned readings</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Avellar and Thomas. 2014. "On Equal Footing: The Importance of Baseline Equivalence in Measuring Program Effectiveness." <i>Home Visiting Evidence of Effectiveness (HomeVEE) Programs</i>. ○ Austin, Peter. 2011. "An introduction to propensity score methods for reducing the effects of confounding in observational studies." <i>Multivariate behavioral research</i>. ○ Nicholas and Gulliford. 2008. "Commentary: What is a propensity score?" <i>The British journal of general practice</i>. 	- Hwk 4: Midterm
Apr 10 Class10	Impact evaluation and quasi-experimental design 2. (Class will meet in the classroom .)	<p><u>Class</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ In this class we will navigate one of the most used quasi-experimental designs in impact evaluation: difference-in-differences design, with a focus on pre-post designs. ○ Discussion on forthcoming Mini-project 3 and Maxi-project. ○ Examination of cases. <p><u>Assigned readings</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Gertler et al., 2011. <i>Impact evaluation in practice</i>. Chapter 6: "Difference-in-differences." <i>The World Bank</i>. ○ Newcomer et al., 2015. Handbook of practical program evaluation. Chapters 6: Ch6: "Comparison group designs" 	No homework.
Apr 17 Class11	Impact evaluation and quasi-experimental design 3. (Class will meet in the computer lab .)	<p><u>Class</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ In this class we will immerse once again in hands-on data analytics. We will carry out discussions on different modeling decisions and how these may or not affect our statistical output and, therefore, the quality of our impact estimates. ○ We will design subgroup analyses and assign meaning to coefficients of interest. ○ Discussion on forthcoming Maxi-project. 	<p>- Mini-project 3, 5-page report: Propensity scores matching. - Power Point presentation of mini-project results.</p> <p>Note: TA session (computer lab)</p>

		<u>Assigned readings</u> o No reading assignments.	
Apr 24 Class12	Impact evaluation and non-experimental design 1. (Class will meet in the <i>computer lab</i> .)	<u>Class</u> o In this class we will interpret statistical output for decision-making, policy and program implications, and determining the size and importance of the measurable effects of policies and programs. o We will link quantitative output to the stories behind them. Our goal is to unify theory with practice. o We will also strategize on how to effectively communicate these findings to a variety of audiences, especially non-technical ones. o Discussion on forthcoming Maxi-project. o Students will bring their own impact evaluation data and materials to class, in preparation for their maxi-project (due next week). <u>Assigned readings</u> o Boulmetis and Dutwin. " Writing the evaluation report ." Chapter 9, in Boulmetis and Dutwin, <i>The ABCs of Evaluation</i> . o Grob, George. " Writing for impact ." Chapter 28, in Newcomer et al., 2015, <i>Handbook of practical program evaluation</i> .	No homework. Note: <i>TA session</i> (computer lab)
May 1	Maxi-project. (Class will meet in the <i>classroom</i> .)	Maxi-project.	- Maxi-project, 10-page report. - Power Point presentation of maxi-projects.
May 8 Class13	Full evaluation: Unifying implementation and impact evaluations, and bridging qualitative and quantitative methods. (Class will meet in the <i>computer lab</i> .)	<u>Class</u> o In this final class, we will unify implementation and impact evaluation—that is, strategies to concatenate qualitative with quantitative data collection, analysis, results, implications, policy prescription and program scale up. <u>Assigned readings</u> o No readings assigned.	No homework. Note: <i>TA session</i> (computer lab). This will be a review session in preparation for your Final Examination.
May 15	Final exam. (Class will meet in the <i>computer lab</i> .)	Final exam.	Final exam

Grading

Your grade will be calculated using the following scale:

Letter Grade	Grade Point	Percentages (%)	Description	Learning Outcome
A+	4.0	96-100	<i>The student has acquired additional insight, far beyond the standards set forth for the course material.</i>	<i>Exceptional</i>
A	3.8	92-95	<i>The student has done an excellent work, developing a complete mastery of the material as intended for the course.</i>	<i>Superior</i>
A-	3.5	88-91	<i>The student has acquired a very good mastery of the course material and the necessary ability to use this ability elsewhere.</i>	<i>Commendable</i>
B+	3.2	84-87	<i>The student has demonstrated proficient mastery of course material yet partial success on some assessments.</i>	<i>Proficient</i>
B	3.0	80-83	<i>The student has demonstrated a foundational level of understanding about the course material and partial success on some of the assessments.</i>	<i>Satisfactory</i>
B-	2.7	66-79	<i>The student approaches mastery of course material and, accordingly, needs extra assistance to achieve a foundational understanding and to apply the main course skills.</i>	<i>Approaching</i>
C	2.0	<66%	<i>Gaps in mastery of course material. The student shows difficulties understanding at least some of the main concepts and with applying the skills of the course as expected by the program.</i>	<i>Developing</i>
U	0	0	<i>Unsatisfactory</i>	<i>Ineffective</i>

Note: Continual matriculation at CGU requires a minimum GPA of 3.0 in all coursework taken at CGU. Students may not have more than two incompletes. Details of the policy are found on the [Student Services webpage](#).

Other content on expectations and logistics:

- **Pre-requisites:**
To be successful in this course you should have taken *at least* one course in quantitative research methods. The course has a strong focus on *how* to evaluate programs and policies—i.e., it is centered in *research design*. Since there are, basically, two main realms of evaluation (implementation and impact), we will go over qualitative *and* quantitative methodologies for evaluation. For the quantitative component of the course, we will use the statistical software Stata. You do not need to have previous training in Stata to do well in this course, but you will certainly have to work a little bit harder if you have no previous training in Stata (or any other statistical software). You will be very much assisted on navigating Stata, and you will also be given all necessary materials “resolved” for you in Stata (e.g., codes, commands, visualizations, etc.).
- **Syllabus:**

This syllabus is a *living document*. The professor will regularly make changes to the syllabus. It has been purposely designed to be adapted as the course moves forward, especially during the second half of the course. The goal of this course is to be of practical use to students; thus, the professor will try to incorporate the specific interests of students according to their individual circumstances and levels of previous statistical training. Even though changes to the syllabus will be timely notified to students, it is the student's responsibility to revise the syllabus on a weekly basis.

- *Due dates:*
All course assignments should be submitted by Tuesday midnight—i.e., the day before class. Late submissions will be penalized with a 20% grade reduction, and no assignments will be accepted after 24 hours late—that is, after Wednesday, 11:59 pm. The grade for such late assignments will be zero. Exceptions will be made only under truly exceptional circumstances.
- *Assignment submission format:*
 - All assignment instructions will be posted on Canvas, and students are required to submit them through our Canvas platform, as well.
 - Assignments should include your name, e-mail, and the title of the assignment (e.g., Homework #3, Mini-project #1).
 - Please submit your assignments in a *single Word* document.
- *Working in teams:*
 - Class assignments: Many times, students will work in teams. For example, Celia Lacayo and Mark Sawyer will work together. It is Celia's and Mark's responsibility to submit a *single* assignment Word document. It is their responsibility to split the work equally, and to be ethical and assume equal responsibility on the quality of their work. It is expected that each student will help the other with editing, such that the complete document will be written professionally. Both, Celia and Mark, will receive the same grade for the assignment.
 - Students are free to work in groups, or not. This applies to all assignments in which working in groups is permitted. The only assignment that **requires** teamwork, is the Maxi-project.
 - Be professional with your classmates. They are, and will be for years to come, your professional network. Thus, if for example, you will miss class or cannot attend a meeting, you should notify your group members (as well as the professor).
 - Presentations: Presentations can be submitted as one Power Point document, but it is expected that each student will present their part independently. Presentations are graded separately.
- *High writing quality:*
 - All written work should be double-spaced, using 12-point fonts, one-inch margins, numbered pages, and **professionally written**. You are Master's and Ph.D. degree students, and that is what is expected from you: Top, graduate-level writing.

- Throughout your professional and academic lives, you will always be evaluated, and will advance, on the basis of your writing. Researchers, including policy and program evaluators, are, in essence, writers. To write is not a component of research or of policy and program evaluation. To write *is* to do research and policy and program evaluation.
- To write is to re-write. Edit. Edit. Edit. ~~It sucks~~. It is frustrating to read assignments that could have been much better with just some editing. All students may not be good writers, but through the re-writing process, all students have the potential to be good editors of their writing. Given the centrality of writing to the academic experience, your academic performance will also be evaluated on the basis of your writing. Good writing will be rewarded; poor writing will be penalized.
- For some mysterious reason, I've noticed that CGU's Writing Center is one of the most underutilized resources at CGU. I highly recommend that you seek assistance from the Writing Center—even if you are a good writer.
 - Presenting well is also a professional and academic necessity. And guess what—the Writing Center recently added a presentation-assistance option!
 - The Writing Center is located in a blue-grey house at 141 E. 12th St, and you can also set up an appointment or get their [assistance online](#). You do not need a referral to go to the Writing Center.
- *Attendance:*
 - Students are expected to attend all classes. It is my experience that when students miss one class, they will struggle for the rest of the course.
 - Students who are unable to attend class must seek permission for an excused absence from the course director or the professor.
 - Unapproved absences or late attendance for three or more classes may result in a lower grade or an “incomplete” for the course.
 - If a student has to miss a class, he or she should arrange to get notes from a fellow student and is strongly encouraged to meet with the Teaching Assistant to obtain the missed material.
 - Missed extra-credit quizzes and papers will not be available for re-taking.
- *Scientific and Professional Ethics:*
 - The work you do in this course must be your own. Feel free to build on, react to, criticize, and analyze the ideas of others but, when you do, make it known whose ideas you are working with. You must explicitly acknowledge when your work builds on someone else's ideas, including ideas of classmates, professors, and authors you read. If you ever have questions about drawing the line between others' work and your own, ask the course professor who will give you guidance.
 - Exams must be completed independently. Any collaboration on answers to exams, unless expressly permitted, may result in an automatic failing grade and possible expulsion from the Program. Additional information on CGU academic honesty is available on the [Student Services webpage](#).

- Do NOT plagiarize. Repeat: Do not plagiarize. Please note that plagiarism is determined by the *act*, not the *intent*. Be careful to keep good records and give good citations and references.
 - Both CGU and I take academic integrity very seriously. Cheating is grounds for failure. One form of cheating is plagiarism.
 - The basic rule to avoid plagiarism is very simple: give credit where credit is due. Always give a citation when you use the ideas, words, figures, or data of others. It is better to use too many citations than to use too few.
 - Faculty are required by university policy to report all cases of plagiarism—even if they are simply apparent—to the office of the Vice President of Academic Affairs. I follow this requirement.

- *Feedback and Communication:*
 - The best way to get in touch with me is via e-mail: javier.rodriquez@cgu.edu
 - I will respond to e-mail usually within 24 hours. Very rarely it will take me 48 hours. So, if I don't respond within 48 hours, please call the authorities because something must have happened to me!
 - Always be professional in your communication with the Teaching Assistant and the professor.
 - This is graduate school. Always take into consideration that an e-mail thread, a formal or informal conversation, or a class discussion between you and the professor or between you and the Teaching Assistant, is a communication exchange between two experts on a subject matter. Please behave accordingly.
 - E-mail: You can e-mail the professor or your TA with [simple] questions. Questions via e-mail are NOT a substitute neither for attending class or the TA session nor for meetings during office hours or appointments. Please state that the nature of your e-mail is in regard to this course by including the abbreviation PP331 in the subject space of your message.
 - Now that we are getting to know each other, students tend to ask me how they can call me. And that is fine. In this regard, I do not feel challenged and I will not think you are being disrespectful if you don't call me "Doctor" or "Professor". Just please feel free to call me "Your Excellency."
 - (Please call me "Javier.")

- *Teaching Assistant:*
 - Please always be *very respectful* of the Teaching Assistant's time. Keep in mind that your Teaching Assistant, just as you are, is also a graduate student—with courses to attend, exams to present, and papers to write aside of being your Teaching Assistant.
 - CGU pays your Teaching Assistant the big bucks to do two things: Teach TA Sessions and hold office hours. For everything else, please contact your professor.
 - TA Sessions: You can interpret each session (a total of 6 in the semester) as a time prepared for extra practice activities, clarification of concepts and procedures, test preparation, and reviewing and pre-correcting assignments.

- Office hours: Please prepare your question(s) with anticipation. Office hours are not only useful to clarify your doubts but also to further explore your curiosity about policy and program evaluation and/or concepts covered in class. You can also set up additional meeting times with the professor by appointment.

Additional important content

Course Policies: The CGU institutional policies apply to each course offered at CGU. Students are encouraged to review the student handbook for the program as well as the policy documentation within [the bulletin](#) and on the Registrar's pages.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities: If you would like to request academic accommodations due to temporary or permanent disability, contact the CGU Dean of Students and Coordinator for Student Disability Services at DisabilityServices@cgu.edu or 909-607-9448. Appropriate accommodations are considered after you have conferred with the Office of Disability Services (ODS) and presented the required documentation of your disability to the ODS.

Mental Health Resources: Graduate school is a context where mental health struggles can arise or be exacerbated. If you ever find yourself struggling, please ask for help. If you wish to seek out campus resources, here is some basic information: <https://www.cuc.claremont.edu/mcaps/>

Monsour Counseling and Psychological Services (MCAPS) is committed to promoting psychological wellness for all students at the Claremont Colleges. Professional and well-trained psychologists, psychiatrists, and post-doctoral and intern therapists offer support for a range of psychological issues in a confidential and safe environment. Ph: (909) 621-8202; after hours emergency (909) 607-2000.

Tranquada Student Services Center, 1st floor
757 College Way
Claremont, CA 91711

Title IX: If I learn of any potential violation of CGU's gender-based misconduct policy (e.g., rape, sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence, or stalking) by any means, I am required to notify the CGU Title IX Coordinator at Deanof.Students@cgu.edu or (909) 607-9448. Students can request confidentiality from the institution, which I will communicate to the Title IX Coordinator. If students want to speak with someone confidentially, the following resources are available on and off campus: EmPOWER Center (909) 607-2689, Monsour Counseling and Psychological Services (909) 621-8202, and The Chaplains of the Claremont Colleges (909) 621-8685. Speaking with a confidential resource does not preclude students from making a formal report to the Title IX Coordinator if and when they are ready. Confidential resources can walk students through all of their reporting options. They can also provide students with information and assistance in accessing academic, medical, and other support services they may need.

Campus Security: Campus security can be reached 24 hours/day at (909) 607-2000.