The Heller School for Social Policy and Management  
Brandeis University  
Sustainable International Development Graduate Program  

HS 278f  
Spring Module II, Heller  
Monitoring and Evaluation  

Instructor  
Bridget Leigh Snell  
Office Hours, Adjunct Office, Monday after class or by appointment.  
(617) 259-7634 (mobile)  

University Notices:  

1. If you are a student with a documented disability record at Brandeis University and wish to have a reasonable accommodation made for you in this class, please advise me immediately.  

2. You are expected to be honest in all of your academic work. The University policy on academic honesty is distributed annually as section 5 of the Rights and Responsibilities handbook. Instances of alleged dishonesty are subject to possible judicial action. Potential sanctions include failure in the course and suspension from the University. If you have any questions about my expectations, please ask.

Academic integrity is central to the mission of educational excellence at Brandeis University. Each student is expected to turn in work completed independently, except when assignments specifically authorize collaborative effort. It is not acceptable to use the words or ideas of another person—be it a world-class philosopher or your roommate—without proper acknowledgement of that source. This means that you must use footnotes and quotation marks to indicate the source of any phrases, sentences, paragraphs or ideas found in published volumes, on the internet, or created by another student. If you are in doubt about the instructions for any assignment in this course, you must ask for clarification.

This course meets each Monday  
Section 1 161HS-278F-1: 9:00 – 11:50  
Section 2 161HS-278F-2: 2:00 – 4:50

Course Description  

The terms monitoring and evaluation are used to describe a wide range of formal and informal data collection and analysis techniques, generally aimed at letting us know whether a project, program, or policy is working and why. The process of evaluation is embedded in and affected by planning, organizational and environmental dynamics which affect attitudes towards evaluation, influence which approaches are most effective, and impact on whether monitoring and evaluation is utilized (“learning for action”) or simply languishes in a file drawer somewhere. Because the world continues to struggle with unacceptable levels of poverty and all the inequities and inequalities this implies, those of us who have committed ourselves to pursuing sustainable development have an obligation to be careful stewards of the natural, financial and human resources at our disposal as members of communities and/or employees or managers of
development organizations. One essential tool for ensuring accountability is effective program monitoring and evaluation.

This course introduces students to the field of evaluation, including their various purposes, designs, methodologies for data collection and analysis, and utilization. We will also explore the context in which evaluations are carried out, frequent challenges and pitfalls in conducting evaluation, and some tricks of the trade drawing on written materials and experiences of the instructor and enrolled students as well. Students should leave the course informed consumers of evaluations, capable of thinking through evaluation design and contracting qualified specialists in the course of their own work, knowledgeable of the wealth of additional resources (many web-based) should they want to deepen their personal skills in evaluation, and be equipped with some applicable methods and approaches drawing from both this and their planning courses. As is consistent with the underpinnings of the Program on Sustainable International Development, we will focus on issues of sustainability and be particularly mindful of gender dimensions of development programs and evaluation approaches.

Core Competencies

**Conceptual:** On a conceptual level, students will understand

- The range and purposes of project and program evaluation
- The links between planning, implementation and evaluation and how all are affected by implicit or explicit theories of change
- The types of evaluation
- The range of evaluation designs and methods
- The trade-offs amongst cost, validity, learning and participation

**Skills**

- Conducting a stakeholder analysis
- Identifying and mapping the theory of change in a given program
- Assessing appropriate approaches for process and outcome evaluations, taking into account resource and time constraints
- Identifying expected and unexpected outcomes and developing appropriate measures
- Methods for mainstreaming gender into evaluations and/or doing gender-focused evaluation
- Focus on essential information and data needs which significantly contribute to better decision making
- Design a simple evaluation

Course Requirements

Attendance in all sessions and prompt arrival to class
Preparation of all readings
Participation in class discussions and small group work
Completion of an in-class quiz, a short writing assignment, and end of module reflection
Class project
Course Grading
Participation in discussions and group work – 20%
Completion of short written assignments (2) – 25%
Class quiz (15%)
Class project – 40%

Staying on Top of the Course

This is an intensive course that will be covering a lot of material in seven weeks. It is imperative that you stay on top of readings and assignments. If you can not meet a deadline, please call me or leave me an email prior to the due date, and we will work out an alternative. After the first quiz in session 3, I will follow-up with any student that appears to be having particular difficulties with the course materials, again to ensure that each of you gets the most out of the class as possible.

Please Note: On the first day of class we will discuss what you hope to get out of class, and ascertain if there are any important topic areas that should be included. I will also administer a simple assessment to better understand your level of experience in program planning and evaluation. This class is a learning collaborative where each of you brings important perspectives and experiences that can contribute to class, even if they may not be directly related to the core competencies. For example, some of you may be wizards at navigating the web, others may have a strong understanding of cultural dimensions that sometimes complicate development work and collaboration, some of you may know something about adult learning with its implications of how to best disseminate and utilize evaluation. These and other things are all assets that will enrich the class.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Wk</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>20 Jan</td>
<td>Introduction to Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>1 Feb</td>
<td>Evaluation I- A Systematic Approach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>8 Feb</td>
<td>Evaluation II- Tailoring Evaluations and Theories of Change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>BREAK</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>29 Feb</td>
<td>Evaluation IV- Indicators, Data Collection and Analysis: Technical approaches and decision making.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>7 Mar</td>
<td>Evaluation Design Presentations</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Class Curriculum and Syllabus

Class 1: Introduction to Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning

Class will focus on:
Why is it important to evaluate? What makes a good evaluation? Is there “one best way” to do evaluation?

We will also explore core concepts and practices associated with monitoring – a central program management practice for effective development.

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Required Readings:


Optional Reading


Belen Sanz and Flaminia, UN Women, Human Rights and Gender Equality in Evaluations, UNEG (2011)
Also Interviews with the Authors on YouTube: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VJAhS20smVw&list=PLE837798FE4280E11&index=1

Class 2: Methods of Monitoring & Evaluation: The Methods Jigsaw

We engage in a dynamic and highly interactive in-class exercise, a modified jigsaw puzzle, to explore and socialize your understanding different evaluation methodologies. How does this view of methods help us to make choices about methods, and how to take a mixed method approach to evaluation?

Required reading


Slocum, Power, Process and Participation, review diagnostic tools
Overview of Participatory Methods and Processes
Activities, Resources and Benefit Analysis
Gender Resource Mapping
Wealth Ranking

Optional Reading:

OECD; Glossary of Key Terms in Evaluation and Results-Based Management found at www.oecd.org/dataoecd/29/21/2754804.pdf. (use as reference)

You will get a short (2-page) writing assignment to be handed in at the beginning of class 3.

Class 3: Evaluation I: A Systematic Approach

We will understand how to carry out a systematic approach to evaluation and consider how to tailor evaluations to the program, stakeholder relationship and resources available. This class demystifies the approach to evaluation which makes us better consumers, commissioners and conductors of evaluation.

Required reading


The instructor will structure a class debate based on various ideologies and approaches to evaluation.

Required Reading:
Class members are assigned to read ONE and only ONE of the following BEFORE class:


A 1- HOUR HOME-BASED QUIZ WILL BE ADMINISTERED ON LATTE BEFORE CLASS 4.
Classes 4 - 6 Evaluation Design

Note to class: By this point you will have received an overview of issues in evaluation, benefits and challenges of carrying out monitoring and evaluation, a broad familiarity with evaluation approaches and methods. The last third of this course will be focused on the practice of evaluation design using as a case study, Uttaran’s program, which is documented in the video.

Community. The class will be divided up into teams, who will be jointly tasked to design an evaluation under different scenarios. To minimize coordination difficulties, the teams will be small (3-4 people), and time will be allocated in classes 9 and 10 for teams to do at least some of the group work they need to complete. Further information on project deadlines will be provided.

Class 4: Evaluation II - Tailoring Evaluations

We work to adapt and tailor our evaluation to the particular context, situation and power dynamics and rights issues using a case study program. We use scenarios to better understand some archetypal evaluation designs.

Required Readings:


Optional Reading:

Preskill, Hallie and Srik Gopal; *Evaluating Complexity: Propositions for Improving Practice*, FSG (undated).


We will watch the video “Community” at the beginning of class.

*You will get a short (2-page) writing assignment to be handed in at the beginning of class 6.*

Class 5: Evaluation III – Measuring Empowerment

We will look closely at current concepts of empowerment and efforts to measure changes in power relations between rights holders and duty bearers across different types of development interventions. We will look closely at some theories of change about how empowerment change happens. We will look at underlying assumptions and risks.
We will consider whether our monitoring and evaluation system can be set up to study how gender relations shift overtime in this program.

Required Readings:


Optional Reading:


**Class 6: Evaluation IV- Indicators, Data Collection and Analysis**

We will review different approaches to identifying indicators for monitoring and evaluation purposes.

As part of your class project, each group will be asked to prioritize 4 - 5 project-led indicators to monitor and explain their preferred means to collect data on those indicators.

Before the end of the class we will discuss the different approaches to:
- Indicator selection.
- Triangulation (using multiple methods to deepen analysis and increase validity).
- Sample selection.

During this class your project group will make key decisions as a group about your evaluation design with input from your instructors.

**Required reading:**


http://www.eval.org/Publications/GuidingPrinciplesPrintable.asp

**Class 7: Group Presentations - Evaluation Designs**

Student group presentations of the program evaluation designs. (More details on expectations for presentations will be provided during week 4.)

- Peer review.
- Professor feedback.

The various presentations will help students to:

- Understand how you can tailor an evaluation to a context or different resource and stakeholder considerations
- Apply mixed methods
- Make explicit your evaluation design choices and how the design choices are more or less related to evaluation purpose and questions.