

**PPG1008H1: PROGRAM EVALUATION FOR PUBLIC POLICY
UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO, WINTER 2020**

1. BASIC INFORMATION

Section L0101 meets

- Tuesday 10:10am–1:00pm in CG 160
- Tuesday 2:10–5:00pm on February 25th for midterm exam
- Stata tutorial: Wednesday 12:30–1:30pm in UC 314 through February 25th

Section L0102 meets

- Tuesday 2:10–5:00pm in CG 160
- Stata tutorial: Thursday 12:30–1:30pm in CG 160 through February 25th

Instructor: Jonathan Hall

Weeks teaching: Through February 25th

Office: GE 356

Phone: 416-978-5110

Email: jonathan.hall@utoronto.ca

Office hours: Friday 1:30–3:30pm through February 25th; also by appointment

Instructor: James Radner

Weeks teaching: After February 25th

Office: CG 61A

Phone: 416-946-0303

Email: james.radner@utoronto.ca

Office hours: Tuesday 5–6pm after February 25th, also by appointment

Teaching fellow through February 25th: Ian Herzog

Email: ian.herzog@mail.utoronto.ca

Office hours through February 25th:

- Monday 10–noon in UC 314
- Wednesday 12:10–12:30 and 1:30–2:00 in UC 314
- Thursday 12:10–12:30 and 1:30–2:00 in CG 160
- Friday 10:30am–12:30pm – as an experiment, we will have these hours be “virtual” - details to be announced

Teaching fellow after February 25th: Matthew Quance

Email: m.quance@mail.utoronto.ca

Office hours: TBA

Course website: <https://q.utoronto.ca/>

2. COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES

This course will introduce students to both quantitative and qualitative methods in program evaluation for public policy. Students will gain an understanding of when and how to use various methods of program evaluation and will be exposed to both theoretical concepts and case studies.

3. TEXTBOOKS

The following textbooks are available at the University of Toronto Bookstore. ISBNs are included so you can see if you can find cheaper versions online.

- Key resources for quantitative methods
 - Angrist, Joshua D. and Jorn-Steffen Pischke. 2014. *Mastering Metrics*. Princeton University Press. ISBN: 9780691152844.
- Supplemental resource for quantitative methods
 - Stock, James H. and Mark W. Watson. 2011. *Introduction to Econometrics*, 3rd ed. Pearson/Addison-Wesley. ISBN: 0138009007.
- Key resource for qualitative methods
 - Patton, Michael Q. 2014. *Qualitative Research and Evaluation Methods*, 4th ed. Los Angeles: Sage. ISBN: 1412972124

Excerpts from this large volume, the locus classicus for the field, will be assigned for the qualitative portion of the course. Acquisition of the book itself would give you a superb and comprehensive reference, but is not required for this course.
- Supplemental resources for qualitative methods
 - Rossi, Peter H., Lipsey, Mark W., and Howard E. Freeman. 2004. *Evaluation: A Systematic Approach*, 7th ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. ISBN: 0761908943
 - Wholey, Joseph S., Hatry, Harry P., and Kathryn E. Newcomer. 2004. *Handbook of Practical Program Evaluation*, 2nd ed. San Francisco, California: Jossey-Bass. ISBN: 0787967130

4. APPROACH

Part I (until February 25th). This portion of the class is primarily lecture based, with regular group discussion. The typical week will include a lecture on a particular econometric methodology and a discussion of research papers which use that methodology. Each week's homework will be designed to help students learn how to implement the methodology using Stata.

Part II (after February 25th). This portion of the course still includes regular lectures, but will have more emphasis on applications, case discussions, and in-class group work. Each regular class during Part II (i.e., after February 25th, though the first class after February 25th, which introduces Part II, has a simplified format) will be divided into three 50-minute periods as follows (based on a 2:10pm start):

- *Period 1:* 2:10—3:00pm. Section meets in plenary (40 students). Lecture on core topic for the week.
- *Break:* 3:00—3:15pm
- *Period 2:* 3:15—4:05pm. Class divides into two subsections, meeting in adjacent rooms. (Students will be assigned to Subsection A or Subsection B for the entire second half of the course.) Subsection A meets with the course instructor and discusses the case study for the week. Subsection B meets with the Teaching Fellow and completes the student team assignment for the week (see the section on the Student Team Project below).
- *Period 3:* 4:10—5:00pm. Class is again in two subsections, with the program from Period 2 flipped across the subsections. Subsection B meets with the course instructor and discusses the case study for the week. Subsection A meets with the Teaching Fellow and completes the student team assignment for the week (see below).

At the end of term (after a week of no class meetings, for prep), there will be special sessions scheduled for student teams to deliver their presentations in their subsections. These special sessions will be held on MONDAY, April 6th and TUESDAY, April 7th. No plenary section meetings will be held that week; instead, each subsection will, during the designated time Monday or Tuesday, meet for a two-hour period to hear the four student team presentations within that subsection. Each student attends one such two-hour session, assignments TBA.

5. REQUIREMENTS

Prerequisites. PPG1004H. Prerequisites requirements are strictly enforced.

6. POLICIES

First rule of holes. Stop digging and get some help! Come see one of us, CAPS, or any of the other resources listed below.

No glowing rectangles. You are not allowed to have computers, tablets, or phones out during class, except for when working on assignments with the teaching fellow. A growing body of research finds that even when electronic devices are used in the best possible way they still lead to worse student outcomes. For an overview of the empirical evidence, see <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/11/22/business/laptops-not-during-lecture-or-meeting.html>. Each time we see your computer, tablet, phone, etc. in class will be penalized by a one percentage point reduction in your final grade.

Email. We check our University of Toronto email accounts once each business day and expect you to do the same. We will respond to all emails within two business days. Emails should be sent from your official University of Toronto email address. When emailing us please prefix the subject line with [PPG1008] so that we can prioritize your message. Please copy the teaching fellow on any email sent to one of us.

In order to help us get to know you better, we would prefer that you ask questions in class, after class, or during office hours; rather than by email. In addition, it is generally more efficient to get any longer questions answered in person rather than over email.

Attendance policy. Although there are two sections for this course, you need to attend the section that you are registered in, except in case of an accommodation agreed in advance with the instructor. Class participation is part of your grade for the classes after March 1, and unexcused absences (see the Accommodation section below for our policy on excusing absence) will count against that grade.

Munk civility policy. The Munk School is committed to creating and fostering a positive learning environment based on open communication, mutual respect, and inclusion. The School encourages behaviour that is welcoming, supportive, and respectful of cultural and individual differences at all times, both within and outside the classroom.

In this course, each voice in the classroom has something of value to contribute to class discussion. Please respect the different experiences, beliefs and values expressed by your fellow students, faculty member(s), and guest speakers.

Accommodation. We are willing to provide reasonable accommodations for a variety of reasons (such as disability/health problems, religious observance, participation in an extra-curricular activity, death in the family, illness, or injury). To be fair to all the students in the course, we require documentation of the need for accommodation and a written request to consider a reasonable accommodation. Requests for accommodation must be made in advance of the relevant date, unless the underlying circumstance (for example, a health emergency) makes advance notice unreasonable. In situations where advanced notice is unreasonable, the supporting documentation must be received within a week of the relevant exam, class, or assignment due date. For any other reason the request must be made before the end of the second week of the course. We especially want to highlight that we are willing to make accommodations to the ban on electronic devices and cold-calling.

If you need an accommodation due to illness or injury you must provide us with an original, fully completed University of Toronto Verification of Student Illness or Injury form, available at <http://www.illnessverification.utoronto.ca>. The doctor's OHIP registration number must be provided. Please familiarize yourself with the FAQ at this website. This should be received within 48 hours of the due date or exam date.

If you need an accommodation for a disability you should register with Accessibility Services <http://accessibility.utoronto.ca>.

The most commonly requested accommodation is to miss an exam. The make-up midterm will be scheduled for two weeks after the midterm. There is no make-up exam for the make-up exam or make-up final.

Late homework. Late homework will be assessed a three percentage point penalty and an additional one percentage point penalty for every day late beyond the first.

To assist you in managing your workload while searching for an internship, in the first half of the course you are allowed to turn in the Stata portion of one assignment one week late with no penalty. “The Stata portion” means any questions that involve Stata, not just the parts of the questions that involve Stata. To claim this extension, please put a note at the top of the assignment stating you are using your one-time extension.

Appealing grades. If you believe an assignment, quiz, or exam has been incorrectly graded, you may ask the person who graded it for a re-evaluation. You need to make this request as soon as possible after receiving the work back, and the request must be received within one week of the coursework being handed back. The entire work will be regraded and your grade may increase or decrease. We have this policy not to punish you for asking for a re-evaluation but because notwithstanding all our efforts to achieve precision in grading, grading inevitably involves a degree of randomness and in regrading we wish to reduce the randomness (both in your favor and against) on all parts of the work in order to come to a more precise measure of your true performance on the assignment. If after completing this process you still have a problem with any aspect of your grade, the overall grade appeal process under the university’s policies remain available to you (see <http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/Assets/Governing+Council+Digital+Assets/Policies/PDF/grading.pdf>).

No audio or video recordings. You may not create audio or video recordings of classes, with the exception of those students requiring an accommodation for a disability, who must speak to us prior to beginning to record lectures.

Exam rules. We will follow the standard final exam rules for all course exams. For more details see <http://www.artsci.utoronto.ca/current/exams/reminder>.

Academic integrity. We expect you to be honest, turn in your own work, and in all other ways follow the University of Toronto’s Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters (<http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/policies/behaveac.htm>).

We strongly encourage you to work together on assignments. A minimum standard to meet in ensuring you are turning in your own work is that (1) you should write your own code and answers, (2) your work should not be word-for-word the same as others in your group (this should follow naturally from (1)), and (3) you should be able to explain and reproduce everything you turn in.

If you have questions or concerns about what constitutes appropriate academic behaviour or appropriate research and citation methods, you are expected to seek out additional information on academic integrity from us or from other institutional resources (see <http://www.utoronto.ca/academicintegrity/resourcesforstudents.html>).

7. IMPORTANT DATES

- Reading week, no class: February 22nd
- Midterm exam: Tuesday, February 25th from 2—5pm in CG-160. This is for both sections and replaces both sections’ regular class time this week.
- Final Regular Class: Tuesday, March 31st
- Special Additional Sessions for Final Student Team Presentations: MONDAY, April 6th and TUESDAY, April 7; each student team will be assigned to present at and attend one 2-hour session on one of these days
- Final exam: April 13 – tentative date

8. RESOURCES

Academic Success Centre. <http://www.studentlife.utoronto.ca/asc>

Accessibility Services. <http://www.studentlife.utoronto.ca/as>

Office of Student Academic Integrity. <http://www.artsci.utoronto.ca/osai>

Rights & Responsibilities. <http://uoft.me/rights>

Writing help. <http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/>

How not to plagiarize. <http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/advice/using-sources/how-not-to-plagiarize>

Health and wellness resources.

- <http://www.studentlife.utoronto.ca/hwc>
- Your safety matters – St. George, U of T: 416.978.1485 – <http://www.safety.utoronto.ca>
- Feeling distressed? Are you in crisis? Call Good2Talk: 866.925.5454
 - Free, confidential helpline with professional counselling, information and referrals for mental health, addictions and well-being, 24/7/365
- Are you in immediate danger? Call 911, then Campus Community Police: 416.978.2222 (24/7/365; Campus Community Police can direct your call to the right service) - Other numbers: UTSG Police: 416-978-2222 | U of T Mississauga Police: 905-569-4333 | U of T Scarborough Police: 416-978-2222

Stata resources. To help you learn Stata we have office hours every weekday except Tuesday.

There are a wide array of Stata resources available online. Below is a short list of some of Professor Hall's favorites.

- Stata cheat sheets — http://geocenter.github.io/StataTraining/portfolio/01_resource/
- UCLA's Stata resources (especially see learning modules) — <https://stats.idre.ucla.edu/stata/>
- Stata video tutorials — <https://www.stata.com/links/video-tutorials/>
- Q&A websites
 - <https://www.statalist.org/>
 - <https://stackoverflow.com>
- A longer list of resources is available at <http://geocenter.github.io/StataTraining/resources/>

It is strongly recommended that you purchase a Stata license. The School also has Stata available on a few computers on the third floor of University College. These computers are not connected to the internet.

9. GRADES

Grades will be based on

- Part I (until February 25th)
 - Weekly assignments (until February 25th) (25%)
 - Midterm exam (25%)
- Part II (after February 25th)
 - Class participation (after February 25th) (7.5%)
 - In-class group assignments (after February 25th) (7.5%)
 - Team presentations (10%)
 - Final exam (25%)

We may curve the course grades upwards, but will not curve them down.

Midterm exam. 25% of your final grade will come from the midterm. *The midterm will be given on Tuesday, February 25th, from 2–5pm.* If you cannot take the midterms on this date, you must tell Professor Hall before the end of the second week of the course. No non-medical excuses will be accepted after that date. This exam can be regarded as the “final” for the material covered before February 25th.

Final exam. 25% of your final grade will come from the final exam. The final exam will be given as scheduled by the Office of the Faculty Registrar. The final exam will focus on material covered after February 25th. The material from before February 25th is a prerequisite for the subject matter in the rest of the course, and so it will be assumed, but not directly tested, in the final exam.

Student Team Project. Each student will be assigned to a small group (of approximately 6 students each) for the team project. The project will culminate in team presentations during special sessions at the end of term, to be held on April 6th and April 7th in special 2-hour sessions (each student attends ONE such special session, to be assigned); but the intent is that the bulk of the preparation work for the presentation will be done in the classroom during the sessions after February 25th. The student teams will meet for 50 minutes during each of the classes in Part II for this purpose.

The team presentations will comprise recommendations and proposals for how to evaluate a single, major public policy initiative. Each team will be assigned such an initiative, their project case for the entire Part II of the course. During each class during Part II, teams will discuss how the topics and methods highlighted in that week apply to the challenge of evaluating their project case, and why. (A possible point of view teams may take is that the specific methods for the week should NOT be used in evaluating their project case; they would then need to develop their reasoning as to why not, with some comments on recommended alternatives.)

During class, teams will develop their core ideas and recommendations in bullet points which will they will submit (in written form) at the end of class for feedback and grading. These bullet points are meant to form the core of the final team presentations. It is expected that student teams will need to work outside the classroom on the form and style of their presentation—preparing and polishing slides, organizing and practicing the oral presentation—but that the content will be basically supplied through the in-class work, without the need for further research.

There will be approximately 24 students, and exactly four student teams, in each subsection. Each team will have a different project case, but the project cases will have a common theme: Each will be policy initiatives for pre-K in a particular jurisdiction (jurisdictions ranging from North America to Europe to Brazil). Before Part II begins, teams will be given their project case assignment and a set of relevant readings. Selected, project case readings, the core for the teams case, will be part of the required reading for the first class of Part II, but there will not be additional required project case readings for subsequent weeks. Instead, the packet of project case readings beyond the first class after the first class of Part II assigned core should be seen as background information for teams (or individual team members) to dip into at their option as they develop their case recommendations.

Presentations will be strictly limited to 20 minutes, with 5 additional minutes for questions and comments.

10. COURSE OUTLINE

Preliminary and subject to change. You are expected to do the readings listed below.

1. What Is Rigorous Evaluation: Quantitative and Qualitative Methods, What is Causality/Potential Outcomes, Randomized Controlled Trials
 1. A&P, Chapters 1
2. Randomized Controlled Trials (continued), Matching, and Regression
 1. A&P, Chapter 2. You do not need to read the appendices, though you may find them helpful reviews of material you covered last semester.
3. Instrumental Variables
 1. A&P, Chapter 3
4. Instrumental Variables (continued)
5. Regression Discontinuity and Interrupted Time Series
 1. A&P, Chapter 4
6. Difference-in-Differences, Meta-Analysis, and Review
 1. A&P, Chapter 5
7. Midterm (February 25th)
8. Evaluation Design in Theory and Practice: Logic Models, Theories of Change and Multiple Types of Evaluation
 1. Weiss, C. (1995) Nothing as Practical as Good Theory: Exploring Theory-based Evaluation for Comprehensive Community Initiatives for Children and Families, in J. P. Connell, A. C.

- Kubisch, L. B. Schorr and C. H. Weiss (eds) *New Approaches to Evaluating Community Initiatives: Volume 1, Concepts, Methods, and Contexts*. Washington, DC: The Aspen Institute.
2. Treasury Board of Canada (2012). *Theory-Based Approaches to Evaluation: Concepts and Practices*.
 3. Patton, Michael Q. 2014. *Qualitative Research and Evaluation Methods*, 4th ed. Los Angeles: Sage. ISBN: 1412972124, pp 200-204.
 4. Four one-paragraph case summaries (posted on Blackboard), so you each know what the rest of the class is up to with the team projects.
 5. One full country case reading per student team (see Blackboard for readings and team assignments).
9. Designing and Running Field Experiments
 1. Rachel Glennerster and Kudzai Takavarasha (2013), *Running Randomized Evaluations: A Practical Guide* (Princeton University Press), Modules 1-3 of Chapter 5 and Modules 1-2 of Chapter 9: pp. 180-212, 386-398.
 2. Peter M. Nardi, *Doing Survey Research: A guide to Quantitative Methods* (Pearson 2003, 2006 and 2013), Chapter 4.
 3. *Case Reading*: Tama Leventhal and Brooks-Gunn, Jeanne, Moving to opportunity: An experimental study of neighborhood effects on mental health. *American Journal of Public Health*, Volume 93 No. 9, Sept 2003; pp. 1576-1582.
 10. Designing and Conducting Qualitative Field Evaluations
 1. Patton, Michael Q. 2014. *Qualitative Research and Evaluation Methods*, 4th ed. Los Angeles: Sage. ISBN: 1412972124, Modules 28-30, 32-33, 43-44, 58-59.
 2. Patton, M.Q. (2003) Qualitative Evaluation Checklist (Evaluation Checklist Project).
 3. *Case Reading*: Peltzer, J.N. and C.S. Teel (2012). The development of a comprehensive community health center in a rural community: A qualitative case study. *Leadership in Health Services*. 25(1).
 11. Analyzing Qualitative and Mixed-Method Data
 1. Patton, Michael Q. 2014. *Qualitative Research and Evaluation Methods*, 4th ed. Los Angeles: Sage. ISBN: 1412972124, Modules 41, 66-68, 76-77.
 2. Jick, T.D. (1979). Mixing Qualitative and Quantitative Methods: Triangulation in Action. *Administrative Science Quarterly* 24 (4), 601-611.
 3. Golafshani, N. (2003). Understanding Reliability and Validity in Qualitative Research. *The Qualitative Report*. 8(4) 597-607.
 4. *Case Reading*: Seddon, Matthew (2015). The Alberta Family Wellness Initiative. SPPG Teaching Case (On Blackboard).
 12. Evaluating Social Innovation
 1. Preskill H. and Beer, T. (2012). Evaluating Social Innovation. FSG and Center for Evaluation Innovation.
 2. *Case Reading*: Scantlebury, Jordan (2015). Evaluating Interventions at the Frontiers of Innovation. SPPG Teaching Case (On Blackboard).