



Graduate and Professional Studies

MPA6080: Policy Implementation and Program Evaluation

3 units

Summer 2026

May 11 - July 5

Online

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Office Location and Hours: Online by appointment

PLNU Mission

To Teach ~ To Shape ~ To Send

Point Loma Nazarene University exists to provide higher education in a vital Christian community where minds are engaged and challenged, character is modeled and formed, and service is an expression of faith. Being of Wesleyan heritage, we strive to be a learning community where grace is foundational, truth is pursued, and holiness is a way of life.

Course Description

This course equips students to build and assess program evaluations reflecting the values, goals, and desired outcomes of implementation. Topics covered include how to utilize evaluation findings to improve programs and reporting for grants requiring oversight.

Course Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course, you will be able to:

1. Explain key frameworks of policy implementation.
2. Analyze the role of street-level bureaucrats in policy delivery.
3. Apply theory to case studies across levels of government.
4. Design policy evaluation strategies.
5. Engage in peer-to-peer discussions to critique and evaluate policy implementation efficacy.

Program Learning Outcomes

Students who complete the program will be able to:

- Demonstrate dedication to public service through collaborative and ethical leadership.
- Combine management approaches for fiscal and human resource management, policy formulation, and program administration to enhance service provision within non-profit and governmental sectors.
- Deliver evidence-based analysis and corresponding solutions to pressing societal issues, incorporating public policy considerations.
- Engage with a diverse population through a commitment to cultural responsiveness and equity.

Institutional Learning Outcomes

1. **Learning, Informed by our Faith in Christ**
Students will acquire knowledge of human cultures and the physical and natural world while developing skills and habits of the mind that foster lifelong learning.
2. **Growing, in a Christ-centered Faith Community**
Students will develop a deeper and more informed understanding of others as they negotiate complex professional, environmental, and social contexts.
3. **Serving, in a Context of Christian Faith**
Students will serve locally and/or globally in vocational and social settings.

Required Texts and Recommended Study Resources

There is no required textbook for this course. Weekly readings, articles, podcasts, and videos are provided at no cost through Canvas. All resources are freely accessible — no subscription or purchase required. Google Scholar links are provided for academic articles.

Point Loma Nazarene University, as a non-profit educational institution, is entitled by law to use materials protected by the US Copyright Act for classroom education. Any use of those materials outside the class may violate the law. All supplemental materials posted on this course site (including articles, book excerpts, or other documents) are provided for your personal academic use. These materials may be protected by copyright law and should not be duplicated or distributed without permission of the copyright owner.

Course Credit Hour Information

In the interest of providing sufficient time to accomplish the stated Course Learning Outcomes, this class meets the PLNU credit hour policy for a 3-unit class delivered over 8 weeks. It is anticipated that students will spend a minimum of 37.5 participation hours per credit hour on their coursework. For this course, students will spend an estimated 112.5 total hours meeting the course learning outcomes. The time estimations are provided below and in the Canvas modules.

Estimated Time to Complete Course	
Activity Category	Time-to-Complete (Hours)

Required Resources	60.5
Weekly Assignments	30
Signature Assignment	20
<i>Total:</i>	112.5

Assessment and Grading

Weighted Grades

This course uses weighted grades. Each assignment category is worth a certain percentage of the total grade (100%) for the course, as specified in the table below:

Course Assignments	
<i>Assignment Category</i>	<i>Percentage of Total Grade</i>
Discussions	25%
Signature Assignment (Final Policy Evaluation)	25%
Weekly Submissions Toward Signature Assignment	25%
Other Weekly Assignments	25%
Total	100%

It is important to read the comments posted in the gradebook, as these comments are intended to help students improve their work. Final grades will be posted by the due date as posted in the Academic Calendar.

Grading Scale

The following grading scale will be used for all exams and final course grades:

- 93 – 100% = A
 - 90 – 92% = A-
 - 87 – 89% = B+
 - 83 – 86% = B
 - 80 – 82% = B-
 - 77 - 79% = C+
 - 73 – 76% = C
 - 70 – 72% = C-
 - 67 – 69% = D+
 - 63 – 66% = D
 - 60 - 63 % = D-
 - 59 and under = F
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Content Warning

I acknowledge that each of you comes to PLNU with your own unique life experiences. This contributes to the way you perceive various types of information. In MPA 6080: Policy Implementation and Program Evaluation, all of the class content, including that which may be intellectually or emotionally challenging, has been intentionally curated to achieve the learning goals for this course. The decision to include such material is not taken lightly. These topics include race, inequity, systemic inequality, and themes related to crime and social policy. If you encounter a topic that is intellectually challenging for you, it can manifest in feelings of discomfort and upset. In response, I encourage you to come talk to me or your friends or family about it.

If you are a trauma survivor and encounter a topic in this class that is triggering for you, you may feel overwhelmed or panicked and find it difficult to concentrate. In response, I encourage you to take the necessary steps for your emotional safety. This may include sitting out of a discussion while the topic is discussed or talking to a therapist at the Counseling Center. Should you choose to sit out on the discussion of a certain topic, know that you are still responsible for the material, but we can discuss if there are other methods for accessing that material and for assessing your learning on that material.

Class topics are discussed for the sole purpose of expanding your intellectual engagement in the area of Public Administration, and I will support you throughout your learning in this course.

Trigger and content warnings are included in Canvas for all videos and materials that address sensitive topics.

Incompletes and Late Assignments

All assignments are to be submitted by the due dates posted and will be considered late if submitted after midnight Pacific Standard Time on the day they are due. If an assignment is submitted late, points possible for the assignment decreases 10% each day for four days after the due date.

Any assignment or deliverable submitted more than four days late will not be accepted.

All deliverables for the course must be turned in by 11:59 pm on the last day of the course. No extensions or incompletes will be given to students to complete course requirements. Incompletes will only be assigned in extremely unusual circumstances.

If you believe you have an extenuating circumstance, such as illness or family emergency, please send me an email as soon as possible so that we may speak about your options. With abundant notice, I'll be as accommodating as possible, as long as it does not compromise fairness for all.

PLNU Spiritual Care

PLNU strives to be a place where you grow as a whole person. To this end, we provide resources for our Graduate and Adult Undergraduate students to encounter God and grow in their Christian faith. We have onsite chaplains at our different campuses who may be available during class break times across the week. If you have questions or a desire to meet or share any prayer requests with our chaplains, you can find them at the [Chaplain's Page](#) via myPLNU.

In addition, the Mission Valley and Balboa campuses have a prayer chapel for use as a space set apart for quiet reflection and prayer.

In addition, on the MV campus, there is a prayer chapel on the third floor, which is open for use as a space set apart for quiet reflection and prayer.

State Authorization

State authorization is a formal determination by a state that Point Loma Nazarene University is approved to conduct activities regulated by that state. In certain states outside California, Point Loma Nazarene University is not authorized to enroll online (distance education) students. If a student moves to another state after admission to the program and/or enrollment in an online course, continuation within the program and/or course will depend on whether Point Loma Nazarene University is authorized to offer distance education courses in that state. It is the student's responsibility to notify the institution of any change in his or her physical location. Refer to the map on [State Authorization](#) to view which states allow distance education outside of California.

PLNU Copyright Policy

Point Loma Nazarene University, as a non-profit educational institution, is entitled by law to use materials protected by the US Copyright Act for classroom education. Any use of those materials outside the class may violate the law.

PLNU Recording Notification

In order to enhance the learning experience, please be advised that this course may be recorded by the professor for educational purposes, and access to these recordings will be limited to enrolled students and authorized personnel.

Note that all recordings are subject to copyright protection. Any unauthorized distribution or publication of these recordings without written approval from the University (refer to the Dean) is strictly prohibited.

PLNU Academic Honesty Policy

Students should demonstrate academic honesty by doing original work and by giving appropriate credit to the ideas of others. Academic dishonesty is the act of presenting information, ideas, and/or concepts as one's own when, in reality, they are the results of another person's creativity and effort. A faculty member who believes a situation involving academic dishonesty has been detected may assign a failing grade for that assignment or examination or, depending on the seriousness of the offense, for the course.

For all student appeals, faculty and students should follow the procedures outlined in the University Catalog. See [Adult Undergraduate Academic and General Policies](#) for definitions of kinds of academic dishonesty and for further policy information.

During the first week of class, you will be asked to submit an Academic Honesty Verification Statement. Submitting the statement is a requirement of this course. By submitting the Academic Honesty Verification Statement, you will be verifying all assignments completed in this course were completed by you. Carefully review the Academic Honesty Statement below.

Statement: "In submitting this form, I am verifying all the assignments in this course will be completed by me and will be my own work."

Artificial Intelligence (AI) Policy

You are allowed to use Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools (e.g., ChatGPT, Gemini Pro 1.5, GrammarlyGo, Perplexity, etc.) to assist you in understanding concepts, but do not use them to write your submissions for any assignments. Any work that utilizes AI-based tools must be clearly identified as such, including the specific tool(s) used. Please use the following sources to guide your citations when using AI:

- MLA Style Center: Citing Generative AI — style.mla.org
 - APA Style: How to Cite ChatGPT — apastyle.apa.org
 - Chicago Manual of Style: Citing Content Developed or Generated by AI — chicagomanualofstyle.org
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PLNU Academic Accommodations Policy

PLNU is committed to providing equal opportunity for participation in all its programs, services, and activities in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Students with disabilities may request course-related accommodations by contacting the Educational Access Center (EAC), located in the Bond Academic Center (EAC@pointloma.edu or 619-849-2533). Once a student's eligibility for an accommodation has been determined, the EAC will work with the student to create an Accommodation Plan (AP) that outlines allowed accommodations. Professors are able to view a student's approved accommodations through Accommodate.

PLNU highly recommends that students speak with their professors during the first two weeks of each semester/term about the implementation of their AP in that particular course. Accommodations are not retroactive, so clarifying with the professor at the outset is one of the best ways to promote positive academic outcomes.

Students who need accommodations for a disability should contact the EAC as early as possible (i.e., ideally before the beginning of the semester) to ensure appropriate accommodations can be provided. It is the student's responsibility to make the first contact with the EAC. Students cannot assume that because they had accommodations in the past, their eligibility at PLNU is automatic. All determinations at PLNU must go through the EAC process. This is to protect the privacy of students with disabilities who may not want to disclose this information and are not asking for any accommodations.

Language and Belonging

Point Loma Nazarene University faculty are committed to helping create a safe and hospitable learning environment for all students. As Christian scholars we are keenly aware of the power of language and believe in treating others with dignity. As such, it is important that our language be equitable, inclusive, and prejudice free. Inclusive/Bias-free language is the standard outlined by all major academic style guides, including MLA, APA, and Chicago, and it is the expected norm in university-level work. Good writing and speaking do not use unsubstantiated or irrelevant generalizations about personal qualities such as age, disability, economic class, ethnicity, marital status, parentage, political or religious beliefs, race, gender, sex, or sexual orientation. Inclusive language also avoids using stereotypes or terminology that demeans persons or groups based on age, disability, class, ethnicity, gender, race, language, or national origin. Respectful use of language is particularly important when referring to those outside of the religious and lifestyle commitments of those in the PLNU community. By working toward precision and clarity of language, we mark ourselves as serious and respectful scholars, and we model the Christ-like quality of hospitality.

If you (or someone you know) have experienced other forms of discrimination, you can find more information on reporting and resources at [PLNU's Nondiscrimination webpage](#).

Sexual Misconduct and Discrimination

Point Loma Nazarene University faculty are committed to helping create a safe learning environment for all students. If you (or someone you know) have experienced any form of sexual discrimination or misconduct, including sexual assault, dating or domestic violence, or stalking, know that help and support are available through the [Title IX Office](#). Please be aware that under Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, it is required to disclose information about such misconduct to the Title IX Office.

If you wish to speak to a confidential employee who does not have this reporting responsibility, you can contact Counseling Services at counselingservices@pointloma.edu or find a list of campus pastors via our [Sexual Harassment and Discrimination Policy](#).

If you (or someone you know) have experienced other forms of discrimination or bias, you can find more information on reporting and resources via our [Nondiscrimination and Anti-harassment Policy](#).

PLNU Attendance and Participation Policy

Regular and punctual attendance at all class sessions is considered essential to optimum academic achievement. Therefore, regular attendance and participation in each course are minimal requirements.

If the student is absent for more than 10 percent of class sessions, the faculty member will issue a written warning of de-enrollment. If the absences exceed 20 percent, the student may be de-enrolled without notice until the university withdrawal date or, after that date, receive an "F" grade.

Students who anticipate being absent for an entire week of a course should contact the instructor in advance for approval and make arrangements to complete the required coursework and/or alternative assignments assigned at

the discretion of the instructor. Acceptance of late work is at the discretion of the instructor and does not waive attendance requirements.

Refer to [Academic Policies](#) for additional details.

Synchronous Attendance/Participation Definition

For synchronous courses that have specific scheduled meeting times (including in-person, hybrid, and synchronous online courses), absences are counted from the first official meeting of the class regardless of the date of the student's enrollment. For courses with specific attendance requirements, those requirements are outlined in the course syllabus.

Note: For synchronous courses with an online asynchronous week, refer to the Online Asynchronous Class Attendance policy listed below.

Online Asynchronous Attendance/Participation Definition

Students taking online courses with no specific scheduled meeting times are expected to actively engage throughout each week of the course. Attendance is defined as participating in an academic activity within the online classroom which includes, but is not limited to:

- Engaging in an online discussion
- Submitting an assignment
- Taking an exam
- Participating in online labs
- Initiating contact with faculty member within the learning management system to discuss course content

Note: Logging into the course does not qualify as participation and will not be counted as meeting the attendance requirement.

Course Modality Definitions

1. Online Courses: These are courses with class meetings where all instruction and interaction are fully online.
 1. Synchronous Courses: At least one class meeting takes place at a designated time.
 2. Asynchronous Courses: All class meetings are asynchronous.
 2. Hybrid Courses: These are courses with class meetings that take place both in the classroom and online synchronously and/or asynchronously.
 3. In-Person Courses: These are courses that meet in person with the instructor and students in a physical classroom setting. With approval by the area dean, this may include up to 25% of qualified class interactions through a Learning Management System (such as Canvas).
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Use of Technology

In order to be successful in the online or hybrid environment, you'll need to meet the minimum technology and system requirements; please refer to the [Technology and System Requirements](#) information. Additionally, students are required to have headphone speakers, microphone, or webcams compatible with their computer available to use. Please note that any course with online proctored exams requires a computer with a camera (tablets are not compatible nor allowable) to complete exams online.

Problems with technology do not relieve you of the responsibility of participating, turning in your assignments, or completing your class work.

GPS Academic Resources

PLNU offers the following free academic resources virtually for Graduate Professional Studies (GPS) Students. Visit myPLNU through the links below for more information.

- [The GPS Writing Center](#) offers:
 - **Zoom Writers Workshops** offered each quad on a variety of helpful topics
 - **One-to-one appointments** with the Writing Coach
 - **Microlearning YouTube Video Library** for helpful tips anytime
- [Research Help Guide](#) to help you start your research
 - The physical office is located on the third floor of the [Mission Valley Regional Center](#) off the student lounge
- [Academic Writing Resources Course](#): Found on your Canvas Dashboard, this course is non-credit with 24/7 access, no time limits, and self-paced content. [Watch a quick video run-through](#) and take time now to explore!
- [Grammarly](#): Students have unlimited FREE access to Grammarly for Education, a trusted tool designed to help enhance writing skills by providing real-time feedback, identifying areas for improvement, and providing suggestions. Grammarly’s Generative AI is NOT available with our student accounts.
- [Tutoring](#): Students have access to 24/7 live or scheduled subject tutoring through Tutor.com, including a Paper Drop-Off Service with feedback within 12 hours.

Assignments-at-a-Glance

Discussions (25%)

Each week includes a discussion post and replies to 2 peers. Initial posts are due by Wednesday of each week; peer replies are due by Sunday. Discussions are designed to build peer-to-peer critique and connect theory to practice.

Signature Assignment (25%)

A comprehensive policy evaluation will be submitted in Week 8, compiled from Parts 1–6 submitted weekly in Weeks 3–8. Students choose their policy in Weeks 1–2.

Weekly Submissions Toward Signature Assignment (25%)

Six components are submitted in Weeks 3–8, each building toward the final policy evaluation. Each submission is approximately 2 pages and receives feedback before the next part is due.

Weekly Assignments (25%)

Weekly practice assignments (approximately 1 page each) applying course concepts through case analyses, logic models, critiques, and reflections.

Course Schedule

Note: No fixed dates are listed on the master course. Discussions are due Wednesday of each week; larger assignments are due Sunday of each week. Refer to Canvas for specific due dates each week.

Course Schedule			
Week	Topics	Readings & Media	Assignments
WEEK 1	Introduction to Policy Implementation	Required: • Frameworks Institute — Framing & Policy Making (link in Canvas)	1. Get to Know You Survey (due Wed) 2. Introduction Discussion + reply to 2 peers (post due Wed; replies due Sun)

	Frameworks & Concepts	• Signe (Jan 2025) — Turning Policy into Action (Brookings) • Andrews (May 2019) — Views of Implementation Success and Failure (Harvard BSC) • deLeon & deLeon (2001) — What Ever Happened to Policy Implementation? (Google Scholar) Recorded Lecture (~10 min): Introduction to Policy Implementation Frameworks	3. Vocabulary List — 15 key terms from readings (due Sun)
WEEK 2	Top-Down, Bottom-Up & Street-Level Bureaucracy	Required: • Video: Street-Level Bureaucracy Overview (~10 min, YouTube) • Pop Culture Clips: Abbott Elementary, The Wire, Parks & Rec (YouTube links in Canvas) • Case Studies: Chula Vista Welcoming City Policy; Trump Executive Orders; SD Climate Action Plan; Community Budgeting Alliance FY25 ⚠ Content Warning: themes of race, inequality, government discretion	1. Week 2 Discussion: Street-Level Bureaucracy in Action + 2 peer replies (post due Wed; replies due Sun) 2. Weekly Assignment: Find Your Own Cases — 1 page (due Sun) 3. Signature Assignment — Policy Introduction & Selection Memo (due Sun)
WEEK 3	Implementation & Coordination Gaps	Required: • 7 San Diego local news articles (links in Canvas): – Care Court expansion (Times of San Diego) – Solana Beach Housing Element (Coast News) – SD Water Future (Voice of SD) – Balboa Park Parking (10News) – Library Vendor Delays (inewssource) – Green Bin Waste (Voice of SD) – Zone Zero Fire Clearance (NBC SD)	1. Week 3 Discussion: Gaps in the Wild + 2 peer replies (post due Wed; replies due Sun) 2. Weekly Assignment: Find Implementation Gaps in Another City — 1 page (due Sun) 3. Signature Assignment — Part 1: Implementation Analysis — 2 pages (due Sun)
WEEK 4	Tools & Practices in Evaluation	Required: • CDC Framework for Program Evaluation in Public Health (cdc.gov/evaluation)	1. Week 4 Discussion: Building an Evaluation Mindset + 2 peer replies (post due Wed; replies due Sun)

		• W.K. Kellogg Foundation Logic Model Development Guide (Google Scholar) • GAO Program Evaluation overview (gao.gov) • GAO evaluation of SBDC or CDBG — Rachel to confirm specific report	2. Weekly Assignment: Build a Logic Model — 1 page + reflection (due Sun) 3. Signature Assignment — Part 2: Policy Background & History — 2 pages (due Sun)
WEEK 5	Case Studies in Program Evaluation	Required: • Urban Institute — Evaluating Place-Based Initiatives (urban.org) • Promise Zone Evaluation Report (HUD — Rachel to confirm landing page link) • San Diego Housing Commission Program Evaluation Resources (sdhc.org)	1. Week 5 Discussion: What Makes a Good Evaluation? + 2 peer replies (post due Wed; replies due Sun) 2. Weekly Assignment: Evaluation Critique — 1 page (due Sun) 3. Signature Assignment — Part 3: Evaluation Landscape — 2 pages (due Sun)
WEEK 6	Values in Evaluation: Equity	Required: • AEA Equity Statement (eval.org/About/Equity-Diversity-Inclusion) • Mertens, D. (2009) — Transformative Research & Evaluation (Google Scholar) • San Diego County Health Equity Report (sandiegocounty.gov) ⚠ Content Warning: race, systemic inequality, differential program impacts	1. Week 6 Discussion: Equity in Evaluation + 2 peer replies (post due Wed; replies due Sun) 2. Weekly Assignment: Equity Evaluation Redesign — 1 page (due Sun) 3. Signature Assignment — Part 4: Equity Analysis — 2 pages (due Sun)
WEEK 7	Values in Evaluation: Efficiency	Required: • Boardman et al. — Cost-Benefit Analysis: Concepts & Practice (Google Scholar) • OMB Circular A-94 — Guidelines for Benefit-Cost Analysis (whitehouse.gov/omb/information-for-agencies/circulars) • RAND Cost-Effectiveness example — Rachel to confirm specific report (rand.org)	1. Week 7 Discussion: Efficiency vs. Equity + 2 peer replies (post due Wed; replies due Sun) 2. Weekly Assignment: Cost-Effectiveness Mini-Analysis — 1 page (due Sun) 3. Signature Assignment — Part 5: Efficiency & Cost Analysis — 2 pages (due Sun)
WEEK 8	Integration, Reflection & Final Submissions	Required: • Patton, M.Q. — Utilization-Focused Evaluation (Google Scholar)	1. Week 8 Discussion: Lessons Learned + 2 peer replies (post due Wed; replies due Sun) 2. Signature Assignment — FINAL: Comprehensive Policy Evaluation — 8–10 pages (due Sun) 3. Final Reflection Paper — 2 pages (due Sun)