



DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL  
LEADERSHIP & POLICY STUDIES

**College of Education, Health, and Human Sciences  
David T. Bailey Graduate School of Education  
Department of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies**



**Evaluation Methodology Concentration  
Master's Program Handbook**

## Table of Contents

Welcome from the EM Program Coordinator	3
Introduction to the EM Program	4
Tips for Success in the EM Program	5
EM Program Curriculum	8
Sample Yearly Course Schedule	9
<b>Suggested 2-Year Course Schedule</b>	9
EM Portfolio - Comprehensive Examination	9
Curriculum Vitae	11
Appendix A	12

## **Welcome from the EM Program Coordinator**

The Evaluation Methodology (EM) program faculty are pleased to welcome new and returning students to our fully online master's program within the Department of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies. The Evaluation Methodology master's (MS) program is designed to provide students with a broad and rigorous study of the field of evaluation. Students will learn quantitative, qualitative, and mixed-methods evaluation designs, effective communication skills, cutting-edge reporting strategies, and hands-on application of evaluation procedures.

Our program prepares professionals who are seeking to enhance their skills and develop new competencies in the rapidly growing field of evaluation methodology.

Students in this 30-credit hour program complete core coursework in the latest evaluation principles, practice, and methodology, and engage in relevant field-based evaluation experiences, culminating in a portfolio-based comprehensive examination prior to graduation. The program is designed to be completed in two years; however, students may take up to six years to complete their degree.

This program handbook is designed to assist you in navigating your graduate program. Nevertheless, you are responsible for obtaining a current copy of the [graduate catalog](#) and familiarize yourself with the information presented – that catalog and graduate school policy are the final word on policy. Please refer to this program handbook and the graduate catalog as needed, and do not hesitate to discuss your questions with the EM program coordinator.

We are excited to have you in our program and assist you on your journey in learning about the field of evaluation!

Sincerely,

[Jennifer Ann Morrow, Ph.D.](#)

[Evaluation Methodology M.S.](#) Program Coordinator

## **Introduction to the EM Program**

The Evaluation Methodology master's program is designed for the working professional. It is offered fully online and asynchronous, which enables students to complete their weekly assignments at times convenient for them. While courses are asynchronous, program faculty offer optional synchronous help sessions, weekly online student hours, and are available for one-on-one meetings as students progress through the coursework.

The Evaluation Methodology program coordinator will serve as the student's main advisor, ensuring that students successfully advance through courses, assisting students with obtaining relevant professional development, guiding students through their practicum courses, and mentoring students as they finalize their final project (i.e., comprehensive exam portfolio). Each semester students will also be required to attend at least one virtual advising session (either with their cohort or individually, depending on the semester) led by the Evaluation Methodology faculty where students will receive guidance regarding courses, practical experience opportunities, program activities, career planning, and be able to ask questions relevant to their needs.

Courses in the Evaluation Methodology program are taught by experienced professionals in the field of evaluation. Our instructors work as evaluation professionals, applied researchers, and full-time evaluation faculty, many of which have won prestigious teaching awards and routinely earn positive teaching evaluations.

For more detailed information regarding the EM masters' program, its faculty and support personnel, please refer to the program brochure and visit the [program website](#).

The ESM program supports and advances the land-grant mission of the University of Tennessee and the mission of the Department of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies (ELPS) where the Evaluation, Statistics, and Methodology (ESM) resides. For example, the ELPS department mission is to (1) be nationally recognized for graduating outstanding, innovative, and courageous leaders and for producing significant educational research that influences policy and practice, and (2) to embed the core values of civility, candor, courage, responsibility, compassion, community, persistence, service, excellence, and justice. For more about ELPS, please visit the [department website](#).

## **Tips for Success in the EM Program**

### **Attending Advising Sessions with the EM Program Coordinator**

Throughout your graduate studies, it is especially important to attend regular advising meetings each semester. Depending on the semester these will either be with the rest of your cohort or individually. The purpose of these monthly meetings is to ensure that you are on track with your classes, course planning, discuss potential practicum and professional development experiences, and to ask questions. Our goal is to ensure that you have the best opportunities to achieve your educational goals.

### **Communicate with EM Faculty if you Need Help**

Regular communication with your EM faculty members is a key to your success in this program. It is strongly recommended that you attend your EM faculty member's weekly student/help hours or reach out to set up a meeting if you need assistance with coursework. The faculty are here to help you and they want you to be successful!

### **Completing Your Coursework**

You will take courses and work on evaluation projects during the course of your graduate studies. This combination will keep you busy and constantly engaged in scholarly work as well as ensure that you gain the necessary knowledge, skills, and competencies to work in the field of evaluation. You will take courses that are focused on theory, methodology, as well as practical experiences. Please refer to the Curriculum section in this handbook for a more detailed description of course requirements.

The EM program is focused on both practical experiences and collaboration; thus, courses often include practical experiences, group projects, and self-reflections as part of the course requirements. These practical experiences, group activities, and self-reflections supplement lectures, readings, and other homework assignments.

### **Professional Development and Applied Professional Experiences**

The University of Tennessee offers a variety of free workshops and trainings through the [Office of Innovative Technologies](#), [UT Libraries](#), [Office of Research Innovation and Economic Development](#), and the [Graduate School](#). These trainings include software applications, such as the Microsoft Office Suite, Nvivo, SPSS, SAS, R, QDA Miner, and Qualtrics. In addition, trainings cover

finding literature, applying for postdocs/jobs, grant writing skills, and teaching skills. Many of these trainings can be attended virtually or be watched on-demand.

In addition to trainings offered by the university, you will encounter other professional development workshops offered by the [American Evaluation Association](#) and other professional organizations. Generally, these are not free of charge; however, they present excellent learning opportunities and are immensely valuable for your studies in the ESM program. We highly encourage you to engage in professional development and applied experiences throughout your time in the program. Your EM faculty and the EM program coordinator will keep you informed of available professional development and practical experience opportunities using the program listserv.

### **Reflections and Self-Assessment**

Although many opportunities are offered by the EM program faculty, it is your responsibility to take ownership of your education. Thus, you should continuously engage in the reflective process and work on self-assessment. Some coursework will require you to engage in reflective practice; however, it is beneficial to reflect on your experiences beyond the required reflections, as this will assist you in seeking out educational opportunities beneficial for you. ***It is highly recommended that you finalize your self-reflections on your course/project experiences at the end of each semester.*** The reflections will become part of your Evaluation Methodology Portfolio (Comprehensive Exam Requirement).

### **Completing Your Evaluation Methodology Portfolio**

To fulfil your comprehensive exam requirement for this degree students will submit a final portfolio of their work in their last semester of coursework (as they are registered for ESM 591). The portfolio will contain reflections on their coursework and evaluation experiences as well as exemplars (students choose these) that showcase the skills that they have mastered during their graduate program. Students' portfolios will be reviewed and scored by two EM faculty members. Students must earn a grade of Pass to earn the master's degree. Refer to the section on Comprehensive Exams for more information and allowable defense dates.

**Planning for the Future**

During the final semester of your graduate studies, you may decide to search and apply for jobs in evaluation methodology. Consider setting up a meeting with the EM program coordinator or any of your EM faculty members during the final semester of your studies in order to discuss how to apply for the types of jobs you are seeking because they may have helpful tips and examples of cover letters and application materials for you. As you will be busy with your EM portfolio when you are applying for jobs, make sure to update your Curriculum Vita at the end of every semester. This process will save you time when you are ready to apply for jobs. Also, you can be sure that you have included every relevant experience you have obtained during your studies.

**Maintaining a Healthy Balance**

Working towards a master's degree is a time intensive endeavor that, at times, can present you with challenging situations. There will be times when you will be frustrated, stressed, or overwhelmed by the process. It will be very important to manage your time well. Especially if you are working full-time, have a family, or have other important responsibilities that require your time. Maintaining ongoing communication with your EM faculty, EM program coordinator, and utilizing time management practices will help make the process go much smoother.

It is also very important to engage in activities that support your psychological and physiological well-being. Find an interesting distraction to free your mind by taking "me time" to accommodate for the rough times. You can easily forget about your well-being along the way, which can have a profound effect on achieving your goal. Lastly, utilizing all the available resources the program has to offer will put you on a path to success.

## EM Program Curriculum

Students in this 30-credit hour program will complete core coursework in evaluation principles and practice, methodology, and engage in field-based evaluation experiences. Prior to graduation, students must pass a portfolio-based comprehensive examination.

### Curriculum Overview

#### *Required Courses (27 Credits)*

1. [ESM 533 Program Evaluation I](#)
2. [ESM 534 Program Evaluation II](#)
3. [ESM 559 Introduction to Qualitative Methodology](#)
4. [ESM 560 Evaluation Designs and Data Collection Methods](#)
5. [ESM 570 Disseminating Evaluation Results](#)
6. [ESM 577 Statistics in Applied Fields I](#)
7. [ESM 583 Survey Research](#)
8. [ESM 590 Evaluation Practicum I](#)
9. [ESM 591 Evaluation Practicum II](#)

#### *Approved Electives (Choose 1, 3 credits)*

1. [ESM 581 Educational Assessment](#)
2. [ESM 677 Statistics in Applied Fields II](#)
3. [ESM 672 Teaching Practicum](#)
4. [ESM 682 Educational Research Methods](#)

Or another distance education course approved by the program coordinator<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Written approval from the program coordinator is required to use an elective not on this list.



## Sample Yearly Course Schedule

Most students in the EM master's program are part-time students who work either full or part-time, therefore it is recommended that students take 6 credits each semester in order to finish in 5 semesters. At times you may need to take only 3 credits a semester, so know that they will extend the number of semesters you need to be enrolled.

### Suggested 2-Year Course Schedule

Sample Full-Time ESM Course Schedule (2 years, 30 credits)		
Fall Year 1 (6 credits)	Spring Year 1 (6 credits)	Summer Year 1 (6 credits)
ESM 533 <sup>1</sup>	ESM 534 <sup>2</sup>	ESM 560 <sup>2</sup>
ESM 577	ESM 559	ESM XXX (elective)
Fall Year 2 (6 credits)	Spring Year 2 (6 credits)	Summer Year 2 (as needed)
ESM 583 <sup>1</sup>	ESM 570 <sup>2</sup>	ESM XXX (elective) – only if not taken in Summer Year 1
ESM 590 <sup>1</sup>	ESM 591 <sup>2</sup>	

<sup>1</sup>These courses are only offered in the Fall semesters.

<sup>2</sup>This course is only offered in the Summer semesters.

**Note:** ESM 581 and ESM 682 are only offered in the Summer semesters.

## EM Portfolio - Comprehensive Examination

The purpose of the comprehensive examination is to evaluate the student's knowledge of the field of specialization, to review their practical experiences related to evaluation methodology, and to assess whether they have the requisite skills and competencies to be successful evaluators.

In the Evaluation Methodology program, the written product that constitutes the basis for the qualifying exam is comprised of **a comprehensive portfolio**:

### Comprehensive Portfolio

Students will prepare a digital portfolio containing documents that show they have gained the requisite knowledge and skills to be a competent, successful professional in program evaluation. These documents include detailed self-reflections as well as exemplars

of their scholarly work in the EM field. Detailed guidelines for this part of the comprehensive exam can be found on the EM shared drive. Students will obtain guidance and mentorship on how to complete their portfolio in the required practicum courses (ESM 590 and ESM 591). In these courses students will receive training on how to develop their portfolio, given dedicated time to engage in practical experiences in our field, work on completing their exemplars to be included in their portfolio, and guidance on finalizing their reflections for their portfolio.

**Students must submit their completed portfolio 45 days before the last day of classes in the semester when they are completing their last required course(s).** Students will submit all materials online (e-portfolio).

### **Evaluation of Comprehensive Exam**

Two Evaluation Methodology faculty will evaluate the comprehensive exam. The faculty will review and score the portfolio independently and then meet to discuss final scoring. The committee will vote on the performance of the student based on their submitted portfolio. The possible options are: (1) pass, which means that the student has successfully met the comprehensive exam requirement; (2) conditional pass, which means that the student must undertake some specific additional work before a pass can be recommended; (3) failure, either with the option of reexamination, or without (in the latter case, the student will be terminated from the program). Failure to pass the comprehensive exam after two tries will result in termination from the program.

## Curriculum Vitae

During the first year of your graduate studies, we encourage you to develop and format your curriculum vitae. Then, throughout the remainder of your graduate studies, you will continuously update your curriculum vitae, which will be collected at the end of each year by the EM program coordinator. While it can be very time consuming to update the Vitae throughout the semester, this will be of immense value if applying for jobs during the final year of studies.

When drafting your CV, ensure to use the same formatting consistently throughout the entire document. Possible information listed on your CV includes: Academic preparation, professional development experiences, work experiences, evaluation experiences, scholarly presentations and publications, honors and prizes, funding awards, computer and language skills, service, and references. The following sites provide more information regarding the development of a CV. However, you will also receive feedback from the EM program coordinator on further developing what you have.

### CV Resources:

AMS: <http://www.ams.org/profession/employment-services/eims/eims-charlwood-cv-oct06.pdf>

APA: <http://www.apa.org/careers/resources/academic/vitae-tips.aspx>

The Balance: <https://www.thebalance.com/curriculum-vitae-format-2060351>

Live Career: <https://www.livecareer.com/quintessential/curriculum-vitae>

Duke: <https://studentaffairs.duke.edu/career/online-tools-resources/career-center-skills-guides/curriculum-vitae>

Penn: <http://www.vpul.upenn.edu/careerservices/gradstud/CVguide.php>

Purdue: <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/641/1/>

RACC: <http://www.racc.ac.uk/files/pdfs/HowToWriteACV.pdf>

UCLA: <https://grad.ucla.edu/asis/agep/advcv.pdf>

UK: <https://www.kent.ac.uk/careers/cv.htm>

U W: <http://uwm.edu/cdc/wp-content/uploads/sites/73/2014/10/CV-handout.pdf>

Wake Forest University: <http://career.opcd.wfu.edu/curriculum-vitae-cv/>

## Appendix A

### Professional Organizations

#### List of Professional Organizations

1. Academy of Human Resource Development: [www.ahrd.org](http://www.ahrd.org)
2. Action Research Network of the Americas: [www.arnaconnect.org](http://www.arnaconnect.org)
3. American Association for Adult and Continuing Education: [www.aaace.org](http://www.aaace.org)
4. American Association for Public Opinion Research: <https://www.aapor.org/>
5. American Assoc. for the Assessment of Learning in Higher Education: [www.aalhe.org](http://www.aalhe.org)
6. American Educational Research Association: [www.aera.net](http://www.aera.net)
7. American Evaluation Association: [www.eval.org](http://www.eval.org)
8. American Higher Education Alliance: [www.ahea.org](http://www.ahea.org)
9. American Psychological Association: [www.apa.org](http://www.apa.org)
10. American Society for Public Administration: [www.aspanet.org](http://www.aspanet.org)
11. American Statistical Association: [www.amstat.org](http://www.amstat.org)
12. American Technical Education Association: [www.ateaonline.org](http://www.ateaonline.org)
13. Association for Educational Assessment: <https://www.aea-europe.net/>
14. Association for Institutional Research: <https://www.airweb.org/pages/default.aspx>
15. Association for the Study of Higher Education: <https://www.ashe.ws/>
16. Association of Academic Survey Research Organizations: <https://www.aasro.org/>
17. Atlanta Area Evaluation Association: <https://atl-eval.wildapricot.org/>
18. Canadian Society for Evaluation: <https://evaluationcanada.ca>
19. Chicagoland Evaluation Association: <https://www.evalchicago.org/>
20. Consortium for the Advancement of Undergraduate Statistics Education:  
<https://www.causeweb.org/cause/>
21. East Tennessee Commission on Children and Youth: [www.tn.gov/tccy](http://www.tn.gov/tccy)
22. European Survey Research Association: <https://www.europeansurveyresearch.org/>
23. International Society for Self-directed Learning: [www.sdlglobal.com](http://www.sdlglobal.com)
24. International Society for Technology in Education: [www.iste.org](http://www.iste.org)
25. Mid-South Education Association: <http://www.msera.org>
26. NASPA: [www.naspa.org](http://www.naspa.org)
27. NASW: [www.naswdc.org](http://www.naswdc.org)
28. National Alliance for Broader Impacts: <https://broaderimpacts.net>
29. National Educators Association: [www.nea.org](http://www.nea.org)
30. Project Management Institute: [www.pmi.org](http://www.pmi.org)
31. Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges:  
<http://www.sacscoc.org/>
32. Southern Sociological Society: [www.southernsociologicalsociety.org](http://www.southernsociologicalsociety.org)
33. Tennessee Association for Student Success and Retention: <http://tassr.org/index.html>
34. Tennessee Educators Association: [www.teateachers.org](http://www.teateachers.org)
35. Washington Evaluators: <http://washingtonevaluators.org/>