

Political Science 527
Performance Measurement
Fall 2011

Instructor: Jon Tompkins
Office: LA 136
jonathan.tompkins@umontana.edu
(406) 243-2683

Instructor: Jesse Munro
Office: Corbin 252
jesse.munro@umontana.edu
Hours: MWF 9-11am and by appointment

Course Description

Performance measurement is the process by which organizations routinely and systematically gather data to assess their progress in achieving their goals. Since the early 1990s it has been touted as the key to “managing for results” and “making public organizations more businesslike.”

This course examines how to identify mission-related outcomes, develop indicators for measuring progress, establish appropriate benchmarks for judging success, and use the resulting data to improve the performance of government and nonprofit agencies and their programs.

Students are asked to develop a fully integrated performance measurement system for possible use by an agency, work unit, or program with which they are familiar. (**Please note:** This is a simulated exercise; the agency, unit or program must be real but the proposed system is to be your personal invention).

Course Prerequisite

Students must have sufficient knowledge of a government or nonprofit agency to be able to design a performance measurement system for it, or at least the ability to obtain that knowledge quickly.

Course Objectives

1. To gain a better understanding of the nature and purposes of performance measurement systems and the ideological and methodological assumptions on which they rest.
2. To develop skill in designing a performance measurement system.
3. To draw personal conclusions about the value of such systems and whether their benefits outweigh their costs.

Required Texts

Harry P. Hatry, Performance Measurement: Getting Ready for Results (Washington, D.C.: The Urban Institute Press, 2006)

Patricia Keehley and Neil Abercrombie, Benchmarking in the Public and Nonprofit Sectors: Best Practices for Achieving Performance Breakthroughs (SF: Jossey Bass, 2008).

Other readings may be found on our Moodle webpage. From the UM homepage, click on UMOOnline, then Moodle Login, and then enter your NetID and password.

Course Requirements and Grading

Students are required to complete all readings, be prepared to discuss them in class, submit five writing assignments for a grade (20 points each) and a final performance measurement plan (100 points).

A = 186-200

A- = 180-185

B+ = 174-179

B = 166-173

Weekly Assignments

Wed., Sept. 7 An Introduction to Performance Measurement

Read Hatry, Chapter 1, and Osborne and Gaebler's Chapter 5 from Reinventing Government (1992) found on our Moodle page. Begin working on Assignment #1 due Monday, Sept. 19. (Get an early start!)

Wed., Sept. 14 Review: The Four Major Types of Performance Evaluation

Read the documents identified below for class discussion; submit Assignment #1 by Monday Sept. 19 by email attachment.

Lesson 1 introduced some of the major types of performance evaluation. (Note that we are reserving the term "performance measurement" for only one of these types.) This lesson is a follow-up. It asks you to skim examples of each type of performance evaluation and then complete Writing Assignment #1.

Writing Assignment #1: Write a 3-4 page paper (double-spaced) that summarizes what you learned/observed from skimming the examples of various types of performance measurement identified below. Analyze each type one at a time, (1) isolating what is distinctive about each and (2) assessing the value or relevance of each type for an empowered staff seeking to determine how well it is doing on an on-going basis.

1. Summative Program Evaluations. Although the term has now become almost synonymous with “performance measurement,” strictly speaking formal program evaluation involves rigorous scientific research (often using experimental or quasi-experimental research designs) and is a one-time-only study. Seek to determine its unique distinguishing features by reading the Executive Summary to “An Outcome Evaluation of the Forever Free Substance Abuse Treatment Program” at the following link. Read only the Executive Summary, pp. iv-x.

www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/nij/grants/199685.pdf

2. Performance Audits. Here you will find that the auditors have to devise unique methodologies based on what questions they have been asked to address; typically the methodologies are not highly scientific.

- a. Go to the U.S. Government Accountability Office web page (www.gao.gov). Read/skim one of the “Recently Issued Reports,” Look for distinctive features as noted above.
- b. Go to the Montana Legislative Audit Division web page (www.leg.mt.gov/css/audit/Default.asp). Click on “audit reports” and then on “recently released reports”. Read/skim any report of interest to you, but note that there are three kinds: financial compliance, performance, and information systems.

3. Statistical Reports. Go to the Montana Highway Patrol web page (www.doj.mt.gov/enforcement/highwaypatrol/default.asp). Click on “Forms and Other Documents” on the right margin, then click on “annual reports/2009”.

4. Continuous Performance Measurement. The first example involves a Forest Service Performance Report that is required by the Government Performance Results Act of 1993 and thus is an example of the “top-down accountability and control” approach. The second is an example of a student paper written for this course that follows the “empowerment-based, pursuit of excellence” approach.

The 2004 Forest Service Performance Report is found at www.fs.fed.us/plan/par/2004/. Click on “Annual Performance Report” on the right margin. Notice how it cascades from goals, to strategic outcomes to strategic objectives to performance measures.

For Juliette Olejnik’s student paper, look for it on our Moodle web page.

Wed., Sept. 21 Outcome Sequence Charts: Activities and Outputs

Read Hatry Chapters 2 and 3; and Keehley and Abercrombie, Chapter 2.

****Submit Assignment #2 by Monday, Sept. 26 by email attachment****

Also: see Karen Aguilera’s Logic Chart on our Moodle web page.

Writing Assignment #2:

Reminder: You have developed a fully integrated performance measurement system for your agency, unit or program and now you are submitting your report to your boss, including a recommendation of whether or not to move forward with its implementation. Assignment #2 represents the first few pages of your Report. It is entitled: Proposed Performance Measurement System for Agency _____. Take some very general guidance from the student paper on our Moodle page.

1) Write the Introduction to your Report (1 or 2 paragraphs). You will want to introduce the purpose of the report by, for example, briefly defining the concept of performance measurement, citing a few of its advantages, and establishing the importance of exploring the value of such a system for your agency or work unit (i.e., the purpose of your paper). 2) Write an introductory paragraph for a section entitled “Outcome-Sequence Chart” which explains what these charts are and the roles they play in performance measurement. 3) Develop and present your outcome-sequence chart based on at least one core value-creating activity that your unit is responsible for carrying out. Complete only Columns #1 Activities and #2 Outputs. 4) Write a narrative explaining your core activity and outputs (see student paper). Describe the core value-creating work activity in your agency or work unit, identify the core value-creating workers, and describe how these workers use their human capital to transform something of lesser value into something of greater value either for internal or external stakeholders. (Use the language of value-creation). Second, identify the work products of this activity in your Output Column. Remember: they should end in an action verb, e.g, students taught; reports generated. [Don’t include measurable indicators in your chart yet].

Wed., Sept. 28

Outcome Sequence Charts: Performance Outcomes

Read Hatry Chapters 4 and 5.

****Submit Assignment #3 by Monday Oct. 3 by email attachment****

Writing Assignment #3: Expand upon Writing Assignment #2 by adding columns to your chart identifying your intermediate and end outcomes and providing appropriate explanations in your narrative section. (Take general guidance from the student paper). [Don't include any measurable indicators yet].

Wed., Oct. 5

Outcome Sequence Charts: Measurable Indicators and Data Collection

Read Hatry Chapter 6, and be prepared to identify your indicators in class.

Wed., Oct. 12

Outcome Sequence Charts: Benchmarks (Targets and Standards)

Read Hatry, Chapter 9; and Keehley and Abercrombie, Chapter 3.

Play around with Oregon's statewide benchmarks at

www.benchmarks.oregon.gov/ [if this link doesn't work, just Google Oregon Shines]

Wed. Oct. 19

Performance Benchmarks (Continued)

Read Keehley and Abercrombie, Chapters 5 and 6.

****Submit Assignment #4 by Monday, Oct. 24****

Writing Assignment #4: 2) Create a new section entitled "Measurable Indicators and Benchmarks", introduce these two concepts, and then identify your proposed measurable indicators and benchmarks for each output and outcome. (See student paper). Finally, add a brief analysis of the measurement difficulties you may face. (**Note:** No measure is needed for your Core Activity. Sometimes outputs won't require benchmarks. Just put N/A. Occasionally your end outcomes will be too difficult to measure, hence no measure or benchmark will be needed).

Wed., Oct 26

Collecting and Aggregating Data

Read Hatry, Chapters 7 and 8.

Wed., Nov. 2

Reporting and Using Performance Data

Read Hatry Chapters 10, 11, and 12.

****Submit Assignment #5 by Monday Nov. 7.****

Writing Assignment #5. Create a section describing how you will collect, analyze, and report your performance data. Use the table format in the student paper. Keep your report focused on how data will be used to close the gap between actual and desired performance.

Wed., Nov. 9

Ensuring System Integrity

Skip Hatry Chapter 13 and read Chapters 14, 15, and 16.

****Complete Assignment #6 and submit it as the final pages of your final report by Wednesday, Dec. 7****

Assignment #6/Final Report. 1) Integrate assignments #2-#5 into a final report, 2) add a brief section explaining how you will ensure the integrity of the system so that it doesn't become a despised ritual, and 3) add a brief conclusion/recommendation section. (e.g., having completed this analysis, are you going to recommend implementation to your boss or not?)

Wed., Nov. 16

Alternative #1: Kaplan and Norton's Balanced Scorecard Approach

Read Kaplan and Norton, Chapter 1, *The Balanced Scorecard* on our Moodle web page.

****Complete Assignment #7. This is not a writing assignment; just be prepared to discuss it in class****

Assignment #7: Propose a couple of measures for each of four scorecards, which we will call: Desired Results [which you may already have identified in your paper]; Stakeholder Satisfaction; Business Processes; and Staff Development/Morale.

Wed., Nov. 23

**** Thanksgiving Holiday****

Wed., Nov. 30

Alternative #2: Quality Management and Continuous Improvement

[No readings for today; continue to polish up your final paper]

Wed., Dec. 7

Review ****Submit final papers by today****