Fall Term, 2012

COURSE TITLE: Evaluation in Social Work
COURSE NUMBER: 683
SECTION Thursday 2pm-5pm (Sections 003 and 006)
CREDIT HOURS: 3
PREREQUISITES: SW522 or permission of instructor

Faculty Contact Information
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COURSE STATEMENT
This course statement was approved by Governing Faculty on Nov. 8, 2006.

1. Course Description
This course will cover beginning level evaluation that builds on basic research knowledge as a method of assessing social work practice and strengthening clients, communities and their social programs as well as the systems that serve clients and communities. It addresses the evaluation of promotion, prevention, treatment, and rehabilitation services. Students will learn to assess and apply evaluation methods from various perspectives, including scientific, ethical, multicultural, and social justice perspectives.

2. Course Content
This course will focus on the direct application of the analytical skills associated with developing and implementing evaluation designs that are appropriate for social work practice. Students will examine the evaluation of social work programs with particular attention to dimensions of diversity (ability, age, class, color, culture, ethnicity, family structure, gender [including gender identity and gender expression], marital status, national origin, race, religion or spirituality, sex, and sexual orientation). Students will be introduced to models of evaluation derived from social science and social work theory and research. They will learn to apply these models as they develop skills in critically assessing evaluation methods within the social context.

3. Course Objectives
Upon completion of the course, students will be able to:
a. Identify and choose the type of evaluation that is appropriate to answer questions consonant with a program’s developmental stage.
b. Specify a program for evaluation and its theory of change.
c. Recognize and apply evaluation and data collection methods that are appropriate to the evaluation context.
d. Plan an evaluation of social work practice.
e. Understand strategies that promote involvement of practice/policy communities in disseminating the results of evaluation activities in order to foster changes in programs/policies.
f. Critically examine existing evaluation studies for their consistency with the values reflected in the curricular themes.

4. Course Design and Instructor Teaching Approach

The course will use a project-based integrative learning approach. Students will work in teams/small groups and apply course content to a state-wide evaluation of the GEAR-Up Program being implemented by 15 universities across Michigan. Multiple pedagogical methods such as mini-lectures, in-class interviews with guests, discussions, editing sessions, instructor consultations and role plays will be used. The GEAR-UP PI and Project Coordinator will be invited to class at the beginning and end of the course to discuss the project and expected deliverables. Students will use C-Tools course folders to access readings, articles, and other resources. Assignments will be submitted on C-Tools in each team folder.

Principles of Instruction: Adapted from Rosenshine, B., Research-based Strategies that All Teachers Should Know, American Educator (Spring 2012).

- I will begin each session with a review of what was covered the previous lecture. Students will be asked to provide the review of key concepts and “take-aways.”
- I will present material in small steps and provide class time for students to practice after each step. I will give clear instructions.
- I will provide models, templates and numerous examples of problem-solving, including rehearsal time. I will think aloud as I demonstrate.
- I will provide scaffolds for difficult tasks and notify students of possible errors.
- I will guide student practice through additional explanations, live review of drafts, and small group consultations.
- I will monitor students for understanding by asking specific questions and checking student responses.
- I will reteach material when necessary. I will teach material needed by students even when the students were expected to have mastered the material prior to the course.
- I will note student successes and give students ample opportunity to practice independently.
- I will provide feedback as students begin to practice independently.

5. Relationship of the Course to Four Curricular Themes

a). Multiculturalism and Diversity: Students will develop the capacity to identify ways in which dimensions of diversity (ability, age, class, color, culture, ethnicity, family structure, gender [including gender identity and gender expression], marital status, national origin, race, religion or spirituality, sex, and sexual orientation) influence evaluation processes and outcomes. Because a collaborative, participatory process is critical to evaluation of social work interventions, attention to diversity is imperative for proper implementation of evaluation in social work contexts.

b). Social Justice and Social Change: Students will develop the capacity to analyze the impact and efficiency of services and policies as they relate to social change and social justice. Participatory, collaborative,
change-oriented evaluation processes and appropriate dissemination activities can promote the achievement of social justice and change and therefore are emphasized in the class. Also important are an examination of the role of power in evaluation and the development of knowledge, skills, and capacities that participants of evaluation can mobilize to shift imbalances of power and resources.

c). Promotion and Prevention: Students will develop the capacity to develop and evaluate prevention and promotion as well as rehabilitation programs that are designed to reduce risk of onset of problems and promote healthy development.

d). Social Science: Students will strengthen their capacity to use theoretical and empirical social science literature to develop and understand whether interventions are appropriately designed and scientifically sound.

6. **Intensive Focus Statement on Privilege, Oppression, Diversity, and Social Justice (PODS):**
This course integrates PODS content and skills with a special emphasis on the identification of theories, practice and/or policies that promote social justice, illuminate injustices and are consistent with scientific and professional knowledge. Through the use of a variety of instructional methods, this course will support students developing a vision of social justice, learn to recognize and reduce mechanisms that support oppression and injustice, work toward social justice processes, apply intersectionality and intercultural frameworks and strengthen critical consciousness, self knowledge and self awareness to facilitate PODS learning.

7. **Relationship of the course to Social Work Ethics and Values**
This course will emphasize the relationship of the NASW’S Code of Ethics, specifically those sections pertaining to the core values and ethical principles of social work as well as the standards of research and evaluation that under gird ethical behavior in the conduct of scientific evaluations. Additionally, this course will emphasize the relationship between the NASW’S Code of Ethics and other ethical codes governing evaluation research such as the Nuremberg Code, Declaration of Helsinki, 1974 National Research Act (PL93-348) and the 1996 Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA).

**RELEVANT POLICIES**

1. **Religious Holidays**
Students who observe a religious holiday on the same day as class will have access to the class materials covered that day. Students are expected to notify the instructor if they plan to miss class. The official UM policy on religious holidays and a list of possible conflicts with classes can be found at:
   [http://www.provost.umich.edu/calendar/religious_holidays.html](http://www.provost.umich.edu/calendar/religious_holidays.html)

2. **Learning Needs and Disabilities**
Students with specialized learning needs are encouraged to make an appointment with the instructor to discuss the necessary arrangements. If you have a disability or condition that may interfere with your participation in this course, please submit the disability certificate prior to the Drop/Add date. This information will be kept strictly confidential. For more information and resources, please contact the Services for Students with Disabilities office at G664 Haven Hall, (734) 763-3000.
3. **Attendance**
The School of Social Work attendance policy can be found in the Student Guide. Attendance is not included in the grading rubric for this course. Students are expected to visit the client agency during the course face-to-face or by phone. Students are expected to participate in lectures, project group meetings, and project consultation appointments with the instructor. Attendance is strongly encouraged.

4. **Deadline Expectations**
Project assignment due dates are listed in the syllabus. All project assignments must be submitted on the last lecture. Assignments submitted more than two days late will be graded down one full grade (points are calculated by assignment). Exceptions will need prior permission of the instructor.

5. **Grading System**
A 100-point system is used. At the end of the semester, the test points (maximum of 30 points) and the project points earned (maximum of 70 points) will be translated into letter grades according to the following formula:

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\begin{array}{cccc}
A+ & 97-100 & B+ & 87-90 \\
A  & 94-96 & B  & 84-86 \\
A- & 91-93 & B- & 81-83 \\
\end{array} \quad \begin{array}{c}
C+ & 77-80 \\
C  & 74-76 \\
C- & 70-73 \\
\end{array} \quad D < 69 \text{ (no credit)}
\]

6. **Incompletes**
Incompletes are not granted unless it can be demonstrated that it would be unfair to hold the student to the normal expectations of the course. The student must formally request an incomplete with the instructor prior to the final weeks of class. Please review the Student Guide section on Ethical Conduct in the University Environment. This section addresses plagiarism, harassment and discrimination policies.

7. **E-mail Communication/Chat Room**
Please include “SW683” in the subject line of all e-mails to the instructor. The instructor will most likely not respond to e-mails over the weekend. Submit evaluation questions to the c-tools chat room that are relevant for the entire class. The instructor will respond regularly to chat room questions and contribute to chat room discussions.
State-wide GEAR-UP Program Evaluation Project
In partnership with Principle Investigator Professor Larry Gant, both sections of SW683 taught by Professor Savas will participate in a state-wide evaluation of the GEAR-UP Program. Assignments will be completed by project student work groups. Groups of 3 to 4 students will be established and assigned to one of 15 universities, GEAR-UP Grantees. Each student work group will be responsible for engaging one participating GEAR-UP university in the state-wide program evaluation.

Assignments
Assignment Alignment with Course Objectives
1. Identify and choose the type of evaluation that is appropriate to answer questions consonant with a program’s developmental stage (Evaluation Plan Assignment)
2. Specify a program for evaluation and its theory of change (Logic Model Assignment)
3. Recognize and apply evaluation and data collection methods that are appropriate to the evaluation context (Data Collection Activity such as interviews, surveys, focus groups)
4. Plan an evaluation of social work practice (Evaluation Plan Assignment)
5. Understand strategies that promote involvement of practice/policy communities in disseminating the results of evaluation activities in order to foster changes in programs/policies (Evaluation Report)
6. Critically examine existing evaluation studies for their consistency with the values reflected in the curricular themes (In class exam)

To assess attainment of course objectives and competencies, a multiple choice exam will be administered to students on the last class. The exam will be open note. The exam grade will be worth 30 points (30% of the course grade). The GEAR-UP project deliverables are expected to total a maximum of 70 points (70% of course grade). Draft assignments will be submitted on C-tools for feedback and grading. Project assignments are presented next.

1. GEAR-UP University Program Specification Using Logic Model and Narrative (10 points)
a). Each student group will complete a logic model on their university’s GEAR-UP program. This written assignment requires the articulation of a program’s theory of change using a one-page logic model. The logic model will include (1) a description of clients and system conditions that led to the need for the program, (2) major program components, (3) detailed activities, and (4) expected client outcomes.

b). A 1-3 page (single-spaced) narrative comparing the state-wide GEAR-UP model with the university model will be written and attached. The assignment will include a Reference/Resource page to identify published references (theorists, research studies) and other source materials (i.e. program handbooks, interviews with program staff) used in the development of the university specific model and narrative.

2. Fall Term Program Evaluation Plan (15 points)
a). Students will design a 1-3 page Program Evaluation Plan for Fall Term 2012. Components of the plan will include (1) the purpose of the evaluation and evaluation approach, (2) type of evaluation components planned and relevant key evaluation questions, (3) evaluation design selected, explanation of appropriateness, reasons why other more rigorous designs were not feasible, limitations of the design, (4) data collection schedule and narrative of measurement, (5) data analysis plan, and (6) a plan for reporting and utilizing the results. The evaluation plan should align with the state-wide 5-year evaluation but only reflect the student group activities planned for Fall Term.
b). References are required and should include a listing of evaluation articles that were used to inform the evaluation plan.

3. **Face-to-face or phone interviews and report of findings (20 points)**
The class will develop an interview protocol to be approved by the project PI. All students will complete an interview training to ensure the collection of valid and reliable data. Each student project group will contribute to the development of an interview protocol.
   a). Each student group will interview the University leadership overseeing the grant implementation.
   b). Each student group will interview the GEAR-UP feeder school principals or other administrator with program knowledge/experience.

4. **ArcGIS School/Community Maps (10 points)**
Student groups will use pre-existing secondary data to describe the feeder school and surrounding community. ArcGis maps will generated as feasible to portray poverty rates and other system conditions linked to school success.

5. **Database Development of 7th Grade Cohort (15 points)**
Students will work with the university grantee and school partners to gather student level data pertaining to last year’s 7th grade cohort (student demographics, services received, parent participation level, academic outcomes). The data will be imported into an SPSS database. The data dictionary will be designed and compared to statewide key evaluation questions.

**TEXTS**

**REQUIRED**


**OTHER TEXT RESOURCE (available at the Graduate Library)**


LECTURE CALENDAR:

All readings are available in the course c-tools site in the READINGS folder.

Lecture 1, September 6 (INTRODUCTION)
Topics: Introduction to course expectations, overview of program evaluation as a type of applied research, evaluation at the program and policy level, types of evaluation, review of student experiences and interests, evaluation standards and ethics, introduction to GEAR-UP project. Students complete “Essential Competencies for Program Evaluators Self-Assessment.”
- Royse Chapter 1: Introduction

Lecture 2, September 13 (LOGIC MODELS)
Topics: Finalize project teams, project discovery, program theory of change, logic modeling formats, work session to draft models.
- Royse Chapter 2: Ethical Issues in Program Evaluation
- LOGIC MODEL SAMPLES (c-tools site)

Lecture 3, September 20 (COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT and EVALUATION PLANNING)
Topics: Engaging the community client, in-class conversation with GEAR-UP team, evaluation planning, evaluation budgets, deliverables, human subject protections and IRB.
- Royse Chapter 15: Writing Evaluation Proposals, Reports and Journal Articles
- EVALUATION PLAN SAMPLES (c-tools site)
Lecture 4, September 27 (CUSTOMER SATISFACTION)  1st Assignment Submission
Topic: Customer satisfaction (domains, items, rating scales, data collection protocols to minimize conflict and bias, data analysis and reporting formats).

- Royse Chapter 7: Client Satisfaction
- Council on Accreditation: Performance Quality Improvement Standards (PQI) 7.11, COA, NY, NY. (H)
- SURVEY SAMPLES (c-tools site)

Lecture 5, October 4 (QUALITATIVE METHODS, PROCESS EVALUATION)
Topics: Process evaluation, qualitative methods, focus groups, interviewing protocols, evaluator observation as a collection method,

- Royse Chapter 4: Qualitative and Mixed Methods in Evaluation
- Royse Chapter 5: Formative and Process Evaluation
- FOCUS GROUPS FORMS AND SAMPLES (c-tools site)
- QUALITATIVE INTERVIEWING (c-tools site)

Lecture 6, October 11 (OUTCOME MEASUREMENT METHODS)
Topics: Outcome measurement methods: in-house designed pre and post-test outcome surveys, sampling calculators, case file extraction, pre-existing trend data

- Royse Chapter 8: Sampling
- Royse Chapter 12: Illustrations of Instruments

Lecture 7, October 18 (DATA ANALYSIS)
Topics: Topics: SPSS Tutorial, data base design using SPSS, data cleaning, analysis plans, descriptive and bi-variate statistics Criteria for selecting standard outcome measurement instruments, psychometrics, search engines, instrument reviews
• Royse Chapter 14: Data Analysis
• ANALYSIS (c-tools site)

**Lecture 8, October 25 (FIDELITY)**

2nd Assignment Submission
Topics: Treatment Fidelity, Manual adherence. Program Drift, Role of politics in evaluation.
- Royse Chapter 13: Pragmatic Issues

**Lecture 9, November 1 (ArcGIS Mapping)**

**Lecture 10, November 8 (ArcGIS Mapping)**

**Lecture 11, November 15 (OUTCOME DESIGNS)**

3rd Assignment Submission
Topic: Outcome designs. Students will present project achievements and lessons learned to classmates.
- Royse Chapter 6: Single System Research Designs
- Royse Chapter 9: Group Designs
- Royse Chapter 11: Measurement Tools and Strategies

**No Class November 22, University Holiday**

**Lecture 12, November 29 (COST EVALUATIONS)**
Topics: Cost effectiveness designs, cost-analysis, Social Return on Investment
- Royse Chapter 10: Cost Effectiveness and Cost Analysis

Lecture 13, December 6 (EXAM)  
Exam, final consultations  
Final Assignment Submissions