Evaluation in Social Work: SW 683, Section 007, Winter 2014

Instructor: Julie D. Cushman, LMSW, ACSW, CAADC
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Classroom: Room 1804 SSWB
Thursday's 2:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.
Office hours: TBA/by appointment
Prerequisite: 522 or permission of instructor

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 them. 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.

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.

Course Objectives:
Upon completion of the course, students will be able to:
1. Identify and choose the type of evaluation that is appropriate to answer questions consonant with a program’s developmental stage.
2. Specify a program for evaluation and its theory of change.
3. Recognize and apply evaluation and data collection methods that are appropriate to the evaluation context.
4. Plan an evaluation of social work practice.
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.
6. Critically examine existing evaluation studies for their consistency with the values reflected in the curricular themes.

Relationship of the Course to Four Curricular Themes:
- **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], relationship status, national origin, race, religion or spirituality and 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.

- **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.

- **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.

- **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.

**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.

**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).

**Course Design**:
The instructor will select required and recommended readings. This course will include a range of pedagogical methods such to promote students understanding of the course materials including, short lectures, participatory discussions, small groups work, experiential exercises, student presentation and a variety of assignments (oral, written, presentations and class participation). Guest speakers may be invited to address special topics.

**Course Requirements**:
**Attendance and Participation**: Students are expected to attend and to be prepared to take part in each class session. This includes completing all assigned reading/video before class, to reference for informed class participation, attending class on time, and participating in all class activities and group assignments. Class attendance is important for you to keep up with course work. It is expected that students will attend all classes unless legitimate and/or special reasons exist for absences or tardiness. Legitimate absences include those due to health problems that can be documented, unanticipated family emergencies and observance of religious holy days. Missing three classes will reduce your final grade; one-half grade (e.g. an A would be reduced to an A-) and each additional absence will reduce your final grade an additional half grade.
Excessive absences may result in failure of the course. Coming to or leaving class mid-way is considered an absence. As adult learners, I expect you to make appropriate decisions about attending class, this includes coming to class late and leaving class mid-way. Any absences or tardiness should be discussed directly with the instructor and it is the student’s responsibility to obtain any notes, materials, handouts or exercises from the missed session from one of your classmates and make arrangements to complete class work, which is missed. Please be cognizant of the disruptive nature of coming to class late. If you are delayed, please enter the classroom as quietly as possible and wait until break to catch up with what is going on.

There are three required papers, a presentation of your final paper and three homework assignments. Assignments are focused on course learning specific to the course objectives. Program evaluation is best done in collaboration, thus you will be working with a team for two of your papers and the presentation. You will be doing paper 1 (program description) individually and then you will be developing a program evaluation plan based on a program at one of your team member’s field placement. A brief description of each assignment follows. A more detailed description of each assignment will be handed out in class.

Paper 1: Program Description – **due January 30, 2014 (15%)**
This written assignment requires a description of a program for your proposed evaluation within your field placement and articulation of the program’s theory of change using a one-page logic model. This assignment will also include discussing what you plan to evaluate. This program description/logic model, if your program is chosen by the team to use for the evaluation plan, will be resubmitted in your final paper at the end of the semester.

Paper 2: Questions, Design, Sample and Measurements – **due March 20, 2014 (20%)**
This paper will discuss the specific evaluation questions to be answered. The type of evaluation, research design, sample and measurements that will be used to address these questions will be described. Support for the choices of the above and how these choices address issues in the four curriculum themes and issues of PODS will be provided through appropriate literature review.

Paper 3 (Final Paper) – Proposed Evaluation Research Design – **due April 17, 2014 (30%)**
You will prepare a complete program evaluation proposal. You will use feedback given on previous assignments to make revisions. You will briefly review the program, and provide a justification for doing an evaluation of the program. You will state your revised questions. You will describe in detail your research design including sampling methods, concern for human subjects, measurement instruments and other data collection, an analysis plan, reporting of the results and limitations of the study. You will discuss the ways in which the evaluation directly addresses or does not address the issues of multiculturalism and diversity, social justice and social change, promotion and prevention, social science and ethics. Finally, you will discuss how the evaluation might be applied to practice, to the program and to policy.

Class presentation - **April 10 and 17, 2014 (20%)**
You will make a 15-20 minute presentation of your evaluation proposal to the class. Prepare 2 handouts: (1) Outline describing the program and (2) an outline describing the evaluation plan.

Homework assignments: **due 1/16, 2/20, and 3/27, 2014 (10%)**
There will be 2 assignments involving exercises/study questions on the course material to be done during the week. These assignments will be discussed before their due date. There will be 1 assignment that is a draft of some of the key areas required for paper 2. These assignments have been designed to assist you in learning the course content and writing your papers. They are tools to help you, thus the focus in grading them is not so much on the content, but on the effort made
to do the assignment. They will be graded on a pass/fail basis. A grade of “pass” will be converted to an “A” for computation of the final grade.

In addition to the above, your class attendance and participation will be considered in determining your grade (5% of your final grade). Assessment of your participation does not depend solely on the quantity of your involvement in class discussion, class activities and class exercises, but also on the quality of your contributions and observations that you are learning. Your participation grade includes ability to discuss ideas with colleagues in a respectful manner, engage in reflective learning, and the sharing of your experiences specific to the material being discussed.

Format of papers
All papers must be typewritten and double-spaced using a 12-point font and one inch margins. Use APA* 6th Edition for your papers, including proper headings, citations and appropriate referencing. Papers should have page numbers, a running header and should be proofread prior to submission, since the quality of the paper will be impacted by its visual presentation, the use of proper grammar and spelling, and other ‘pride of authorships’ issues.

I grade all papers anonymously. With each paper (hard copy) submission, include a title page without your name on it, and provide a separate duplicate title page with your name. Only after I have read and graded all the papers, will I determine which paper belongs to whom.

General Expectations for Written Work
I expect that in all written work that students will adhere to the following NASW editorial policy: In the interest of accurate and unbiased communication, the NASW publications program subscribe to a belief in the importance of avoiding language that might imply sexual, ethnic, or other kinds of discrimination, stereotyping, or bias. NASW is committed to the fair and equal treatment of individuals and groups, and material submitted should not promote stereotypic or discriminatory attitudes and assumptions about people. (Health and Social Work, 11:3, 1986.) or http://www.socialworkers.org/pubs/code/default.asp

Academic Integrity:
Plagiarism – not referencing another’s words or ideas – is a violation of academic integrity and will be grounds for failure on an assignment. In addition, papers or journal entries completed for another course are not acceptable and will be assigned 0 points. Please refer to your Student Guide to the Master's in Social Work Degree Program for further discussion of plagiarism and procedures for processing alleged infractions and the range of possible sanctions. The student guide is electronic: http://www.ssw.umich.edu/studentGuide/. The library also has an excellent area to advise about issues of plagiarism and other ethical issues. Please visit this site http://www.lib.umich.edu/acadintegrity.

Deadline Expectations: All assignments are due at the beginning of class on the dates specified. Incomplete grades are assigned only through negotiation with me and that negotiation must occur before the assignment’s (paper’s) due date. Unless an extension contract has been arranged between a student and me, before the due date of the assignment, any assignment that is not completed on the due date will be assigned 0 points. All assignments for this course must be completed and handed in to the instructor to successfully complete the course.

Grading
Each assignment will be given a letter grade. The criteria for each grade are as follows:
A or A-  Mastery of subject content, demonstration of critical analysis, creativity and/or complexity in completion of assignment. The difference between A and A- is based on the degree to which these skills are demonstrated.

B+  Mastery of subject content beyond expected competency, but has not demonstrated additional critical analysis, creativity or complexity in the completion of the assignment.

B  Mastery of subject content at level of expected competency – meets course expectations

B-  Less than adequate competency, but demonstrates student learning and potential for mastery of subject content.

C or C-  Demonstrates a minimal understanding of subject content. Significant areas needing improvement to meet course requirements.

E  Student has failed to demonstrate minimal understanding of subject content.

Both content and format will be considered in assigning grades. Though content is more heavily weighed in grade assignment, format, and presentation are also important. Failure to follow APA guidelines for referencing and for headings will result in a lower grade. For assistance with writing, or if you want feedback on written work contact the Office of Student Services [http://ssw.umich.edu/current/student-services.html](http://ssw.umich.edu/current/student-services.html) or the Sweetland Writing Center ([http://www.lsa.umich.edu/swc/](http://www.lsa.umich.edu/swc/)). As an “fyi” Sweetland usually wants advanced notice (approx. two weeks before a paper is due) so they can go over edits and so on with you. You also need to schedule an appointment to meet with a writing counselor (734-764-0429) and they’re open from 9-5, Mon thru Fri although always check before you go there since they do close occasionally for staff training and so on. They’re located in 1139 Angell Hall and I don’t think they take walk-ins.

I suggest that you have someone who is unfamiliar with your subject read your paper before you turn it in. An outside reader can tell you if your writing is not clear, if you omitted a word or phrase, or if you used the wrong word. Spell checkers and grammar checkers are useful tools, but not as reliable as a human reader.

The course is challenging and demanding. Grading will be rigorous but fair. Final grades will be determined by multiplying the worth of each assignment, weekly assignment/class participation by the following grade points: A = 8, A- = 7, B+ = 6, B = 5, B- = 4, C+ = 3, C = 2, C- = 1, less than C- = 0. The numerical scores for each assignment will be summed.

I understand that the assessments of your work are subjective in nature and I strive to reduce that subjectivity in two ways. First, as noted above, I grade all papers anonymously. Second, based on the assignment outline I use a template within which I set my expectations for the assignment. I compare your submissions to that template, not to one another.

If you read my comments to you and believe that I have erred, please discuss your findings with me within one week of getting your assignment back. It may be that you do not understand what I have told you, or that I have made a mistake. In either case, I am certain that the situation will be rectified; either you will better understand what I want you to know, or I will correct my error.

Course materials
There is one required text, several required readings from materials/journals available in the library or on-line, video/s/webinars and handouts to supplement the lecture topic. It is highly recommended you obtain a binder to organize the tools/handouts you will be given throughout this course.
Required Text

Additional Resources: May be helpful to you as you prepare your assignments (graduate library)


Journals that include materials of interest include, but are not limited to the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evaluation and Program Planning</th>
<th>Social Work Planning</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Social Problems</td>
<td>Social Problems</td>
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<tr>
<td>American Journal of Public Health (AJPH)</td>
<td>American Journal on Community Psychology</td>
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<tr>
<td>Health Affairs</td>
<td>Behavioral Research Therapy</td>
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<tr>
<td>Health and Social Work</td>
<td>Child and Adolescent Social Work Journal</td>
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<td>Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA)</td>
<td>Cognitive Therapy and Research</td>
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<td>Journal of Health Politics, Policy and Law</td>
<td>Community Mental Health Journal</td>
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<td>Maternal and Child Health Journal</td>
<td>Mental Health Services Research</td>
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<tr>
<td>Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Review (MMWR)</td>
<td>Psychiatric Services (JAPA)</td>
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<td>New England Journal of Medicine (NEJM)</td>
<td>Research on Social Work Practice</td>
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<td>Public Health Reports</td>
<td>New Directions for Program Evaluation</td>
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<td>Social Work and Health Care</td>
<td>Social Justice</td>
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**Course Conduct**

This class adheres to the following Ground Rules for the Class:

1. Our primary commitment is to learn - from the instructor, from each other, from materials and from our work. We acknowledge differences among us in skills, interests, values, scholarly orientations and experience.

2. We acknowledge that racism, sexism, homophobia and other forms of discrimination exist and are likely to surface from time to time.

3. We acknowledge that one of the meanings of societal oppression and discrimination is that we have been systematically taught misinformation about our own groups and especially
members of devalued groups and populations of color. The same is true for sexism, ageism, sexual orientation and other alternative lifestyles - we are taught misinformation about ourselves and others regarding forms of difference and discrimination.

4. We acknowledge that our notions of privilege - privilege of ethnicity, religious belief gender, sexual orientation and class - can distort our understanding of individuals, families, communities, organizations and infrastructure, and can undermine the development of authentic relationships and understanding.

5. We cannot be blamed for the misinformation that we have heard but we will be held responsible for repeating misinformation after we have learned otherwise.

6. Victims are not to be blamed for their oppression.

7. We will assume that people are always doing the best they can, both to learn material and to behave in socially just and honest ways.

8. We will actively pursue opportunities to learn about our own groups and those of others, yet will not enter or invade others' privacy when unwanted.

9. We will share information about our groups with other members of the class, and will not demand, devalue, or 'put down' people for their experiences.

10. We can have an obligation to actively counter the myths and stereotypes about our own groups and other groups so that we can break down the walls, which prohibit group cooperation and group gain.

11. We want to create a safe atmosphere for open discussion. Thus, at times, members of the class may wish to make a comment that they do not want repeated outside the classroom. If so, the person will preface the remarks with a request and the class will agree not to repeat the remarks.

Housekeeping

Electronic Devices
In consideration of your classmates, and due to their disruptive nature, I request that all students turn off all telephones and pagers while you are in my class. This is your time and I want you to be able to protect it. I prefer that you receive no messages during class time, however, if you must be on call for an emergency, please let your home or office knows that you are only available for emergencies that no one else can handle. If you must carry a pager, please set it to vibrate only.

Special Circumstances
If there are any circumstances that require that I and/or the class adapt to your special needs, please consult with me at the beginning of the semester so that I may adequately address these needs.

Religious Observances
Please notify me if religious observances conflict with class or due dates for assignments so we can make appropriate arrangements. The official University of Michigan 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
**Class Schedule: SYLLABUS**-Course Schedule is tentative, thus subject to change. All changes will be discussed in advance so that you will have sufficient time to make adjustments in readings & assignments.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week &amp; Date</th>
<th>Class Content/Topic</th>
<th>Readings &amp; Assignments</th>
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</table>
| 1 1/9/14   | Intro/overview, program evaluation & social justice | 1. Royse, Thyer and Padgett: Chapter 1  
2. C-Tools: Wk 1 folder-NASW Code of Ethics-Section 5.02 (Evaluation and Research)  
2. C-Tools: Wk 2 folder-NIDA-Chapters 1 & 2 (Program Description)  
| 3 1/23/14  | Planning an evaluation, stakeholders, ethics, cultural & other considerations. Formulating Questions | 1. Royse, Thyer and Padgett: Chapters 2 and 13  
2. C-Tools: Wk 3 folder-NIDA-Chapters 3 & 4 (Developing Questions)  

**Homework assignment 1 due:** Developing field placement evaluation plan
### Types of Evaluations:

#### Needs, program monitoring & process

1. Royse, Thyer and Padgett: Chapter 3 and pp 112-123 & pp 129-138 in Chapter 5

#### Needs:


#### Process:


### Paper 1 Due: Program Description

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<th>Readings &amp; Assignments</th>
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**Research Designs:**

1. Royse, Thyer and Padgett: Chapter 8 and 9
2. C-Tools: Wk 6 folder-NIDA-Chapter 5 (Research Design)
3. Behavioral Sciences IRB web site: [www.irb.research.umich.edu](http://www.irb.research.umich.edu)

**Sampling, protection of human subjects & informed consents**


**Week & Date** | **Class Content/Topic** | **Readings & Assignments**
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6 | **Research designs:**
   2/13/14  
   experimental quasi-experimental, Single subject, Feasibility  
   Research Designs:  
   1. Royse, Thyer and Padgett: Chapter 8 and 9  
   2. C-Tools: Wk 6 folder-NIDA-Chapter 5 (Research Design)  
   3. Behavioral Sciences IRB web site: [www.irb.research.umich.edu](http://www.irb.research.umich.edu)  
--- | **Measurement & measurement issues in evaluation** | **Readings & Assignments**
7 | **Data collection & management** | **Readings & Assignments**
2/20/14 | Measurement & measurement issues in evaluation | 1. Royse, Thyer and Padgett: Chapter 11 and 12  
2. C-Tools: Wk 7 folder-NIDA-Chapters 6 & 7 (Measurement & Data Collection)  
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**Homework Assignment 2 due**-questions, design, sample & lit review
### 8 2/27/14 Measurement, data collection & management cont’d

1. Royse, Thyer and Padgett: Review Chapters 11 and 12
2. C-Tools: Wk 8 folder-NIDA- Review Chapters 6 & 7 (Measurement & Data Collection)

### 9 3/6/14 Spring Recess NO CLASS

### 10 3/13/14 Qualitative studies: Design & Analysis

1. Royse, Thyer and Padgett: Chapter 4

### 11 3/20/14 Quantitative Data Analysis

1. Royse, Thyer and Padgett: Chapter 14
2. C-Tools: Wk 11 folder-NIDA-Chapter 8 (Analysis)

**Paper 2 due**-Research questions, design and measurement
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reporting and utilizing findings and results</td>
<td>Homework assignment 3 due: data analysis exercises</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>Challenges in evaluation</td>
<td>1. Royse, Thyer and Padgett: Chapter 15</td>
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<td>Class Presentations</td>
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<td>Sustaining support for evaluation</td>
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<td>4/10/14</td>
<td>Last day of class</td>
<td>Class Presentations</td>
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<td>15</td>
<td>Wrap up</td>
<td>Final Paper Due- Evaluation Proposal</td>
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