COURSE TITLE: Evaluation in Social Work
COURSE NUMBER: 683 (Spring, 2014, Section 00, Class#)
TIME & PLACE: Tuesday 1:00-5:00pm, Room 3816, SSW Building
CREDIT HOURS: 3
PREREQUISITES: SW 522 or permission of instructor
INSTRUCTOR: Maureen Okasinski, MSW, LEO Intermittent Lecturer
CONTACT DETAILS: SSWB - Rm. 3760
E-mail: mokasins@umich.edu
Phone: 313 303.8911
OFFICE HOURS: Friday: 12:15pm-1:00pm or by appointment

This course syllabus was developed through a collaborative effort of instructors: Letha Chadiha, Julie Cushman, Roxanna Duntley-Matos, Maureen Okasinski, Janet Ray, Sue Savas, Joe Sean, and Daphne Watkins.

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:

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.

4. Course Design
The course will use an integrative learning approach. Students will select local community-based evaluation projects based on their areas of interest and educational needs, and form groups of 2-4 students. Multiple pedagogical methods such as mini-lectures, participatory discussions, written assignments, student presentations, and role playing will be used. Guest speakers are invited to present on relevant topics. Students will access C-Tools for additional course-relevant resources. Each course meeting will include small group discussion, a mini-lecture, practice & application activities, group time to work on evaluation projects, and consultation from the instructor.

5. 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], 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.

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 the onset risk 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.


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 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 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 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

2. Learning Needs and Disabilities

Students with specialized learning needs are requested 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 schedule a private appointment with the instructor as soon as possible to discuss accommodations for your specific needs. 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 recorded in this course and in part of the grade for participation.

4. Electronic Devices

In consideration of your classmates and your own learning, please mute all devices during class. If you must be on call for personal or work reasons, let them know this is only for emergencies that no one else can handle. Personal communications such as texting or surfing are fine during breaks and are not during class time. Interruptions, no matter how brief, affect your ability to focus and research has found that it takes 20-40 minutes to get back to your level of productivity prior to the interruption. Computer use during class time that supports the mission of the course (e.g. taking notes) is encouraged. There will be times that I ask for screens down during some parts of the class and I expect ready compliance with that request.

5. ASSIGNMENTS

The course includes individual and group work. I grade group assignments using the grading rubrics found in the rubrics folder in c-tools/resources. **Follow these rubrics** to complete assignments. A hard copy of the assignment is due at the beginning of class. Group projects are completed and submitted using M+Box and individual work (homework, in-class practice etc) is submitted in ctools in your dropbox folder and due at the beginning of class.

You are required to **submit a draft** for review prior to submitting the final version of each assignment for the group project. I will review the draft and provide feedback based on the rubric. Most students have found this helpful in producing a quality paper that earns the grade they desire.

**Late papers** will have their letter grade reduced by ½ a letter grade for each day they are late. The day count begins once class starts on the day the paper is due. I will first score the paper as if it was submitted on time, so the student knows how I rated the quality of their work and then I will subtract the equivalent of ½ of a letter grade from those points for each day the paper is late. The point subtraction will be the amount that is equivalent of the middle range for each letter grade. For example, if a student earned 35/35 (100%) on the policy brief assignment and submitted the paper 2 days late, the grade would go from an A+ to a A- (31.5 points/92%)

**Group projects** are a part of this class. If you have a compelling reason for working independently, we can discuss this further and I may approve an exemption.

6. Grading System

A percent system is used. At the end of the semester, the project points earned will be translated into letter grades according to the following formula:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tr>
<td>A+</td>
<td>97-100</td>
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<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>94-96</td>
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<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>87-90</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>84-86</td>
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<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>77-80</td>
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<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>74-76</td>
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<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>&lt;69 (no credit)</td>
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7. 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.

8. Participation
Students are expected to attend every class session, come on time, have read the required readings, and participate in class discussions and exercises. Participation and class attendance are professional responsibilities. They are critical elements of this class. Students should be prepared to discuss assigned readings and to share experiential knowledge. If you are unable to attend a session, prior notice is expected as demonstration of professionalism. For further details on the graded aspect of participation, see this section in assignments.

ASSIGNMENTS

1. Individual practice & application activities: 25%
2. Participation: 15%
3. Evaluation group project: 60%

1. Individual Activities (25%)
I have designed practice and application activities to help develop your skills relevant to the course objectives. Most weeks, student complete practice worksheets & application activities both in-class and outside of class. The assignments are listed in the Powerpoint slides each week. If you miss a session, you are responsible for completing the assignment. Students will choose five of these practice & evaluation activities for grading (I will identify in the Powerpoint which are eligible). Each is worth 5% of your grade. Below is a sample of list of some assignments.

1. PEERRS Certification (this is required for each student). If you have completed this prior to the course, submit a copy of your certification. If you are doing it for the first time for this course, this is one of your five assignments. University of Michigan's Program for Education and Evaluation in Responsible Research and Scholarship (PEERRS) at http://my.research.umich.edu/peerrs/ Complete Conflict of Interest and Human Subjects only
2. Logic Model and Evaluation Questions Practice
3. Evaluation plan brainstorming
4. Practice data analysis: each student must choose one of the data analysis assignments and complete satisfactorily
5. Skills presentation: You may have experience or attended a training on a specific skill related to evaluation work (i.e. Data presentation, report writing, participatory evaluation, using SPSS, focus groups). With approval, you can schedule a 20-30 minute presentation for your fellow students.

2. Class Participation (15%)
Students are expected to attend every class session, come on time, read the required out of class learning (Readings, Film, Internet Podcasts), and participate in class discussions and exercises.

Participation and class attendance are professional responsibilities. They are critical elements of this class and essential to its effectiveness. It is important to be prepared to discuss assigned readings and to share experiential knowledge. To maximize individual and group learning, attendance, and participation are expected. If you are unable to attend a session, please communicate with me in advance, so you can get any handouts. Students who are using electronic devices not related to class activities will see the impact in this grade.

Your participation grade will be based on:

1. Attendance
2. Active participation in class and small group discussions, even if that means getting out of the comfort zone.
3. Ability to discuss ideas with colleagues in a respectful manner
4. Ability to engage in reflective learning
5. Sharing of examples from your experiences (field placement and others), current events, or literature related to course topics.
6. Demonstration that required readings have been completed by sharing examples or asking relevant questions in class.

“Evaluation in Focus” Class will begin most weeks with a 20 minute small group discussion to focus on a particular type of evaluation and/or aspects of evaluation. Students will read different articles and share key learning points with each other. I will identify the area(s) of particular interest. Use the case study review guide to prepare for the “From your article you should be able to identify 1) agency/clients/evaluation questions, 2) type of evaluation & methods used for evaluation, 3) limitations, 4) key findings, 5) 2-3 points the student found particularly interesting, 6) 2-3 questions to further explore in discussion. The goal of this exercise is to facilitate learning that encourages critical and engaging dialogue among your colleagues and deepen your understand of evaluation.

3. Group Evaluation Project (60%)

The biggest assignment of the course is to plan and complete a program evaluation at a local non-profit agency. Class time is structured to build knowledge and skills around this. You will work in groups of 2 to 4 students-most groups conduct this at one of their field placement agencies. I can connect team with other agencies if their field placement is not a good fit. The scope of the project shall be appropriate for a beginning level evaluation team and is approved by this instructor. Once the agency is selected, the team will find out from the agency their evaluation needs, develop a work plan for the team to complete the project, develop their competencies specific to this evaluation, write an evaluation plan, collect & analysis data, and write an evaluation report.

One person from the team is assigned and the client liaison and communications from the team generally go through the person. Within the team, each person will take the lead for one major
component of the project. Teams complete a workplan for the entire project early in the semester to fairly divide the work, set timelines and responsibilities.

Assignments will be single spaced, presented in a user-friendly format (good design). All are to be submitted in M+Box with a hard copy turned in at the beginning of class. Any deviations from the assignment list must be approved by the instructor. The grading rubrics, found in the rubric folder on c-tools, document the details of scoring for these assignments. Team members should make sure to review the rubrics prior to creating their workplan to better under the details of each assignment.

Time is allotted during each classroom session for evaluation teams to meet. Teams schedule consultation time with the instructor. Ideally, class time will meet most of your needs for meeting as a group.

**Part One: Engaging Stakeholders and Describing the Program (10%)**

This assignment incorporates four aspects of developing relationships and gathering information necessary to conduct a high-quality evaluation.

**A: Relationship Building**

All team members are expected to get to know the client agency, however the agency liaison should be the primary point of contact. The evaluation team will visit the agency prior to completing the evaluation plan. The liaison (and other team members) will have ongoing contact throughout the semester with the agency contact person & necessary stakeholders to insure the evaluation meets agency expectations.

Each team will visit the agency and meet staff (and potentially clients) twice during the semester. Engaging with the client agency and building a solid relationship is key to effective evaluation. The first visit is focused on getting to know the agency/program, its culture, services, clients and other key stakeholders as well as clarifying the program logic model and evaluation needs and include an agency tour. The agency liaison will write a summary of the first visit.

Project team may make more than two visits and will have regular contact with the agency throughout the project. Site visits and contact with the client agency serve multiple purposes throughout the semester: gathering information to learn more about the program and clients, understanding the evaluation needs, reviewing documents, gathering data and discussing drafts of the evaluation plan and report prior to submission of the final documents to the agency.

**B: Program Specification-Logic Model**

Submit a updated Logic Model for the program. A logic model is a one page document that describes the clients, the problem being addressed, the resources available to do this, program components, activities and outcome goals. In some cases, the agency will not have a program logic model and the team will develop one based on the information the agency provides. Many programs already have written logic models and the evaluation team can use this and update it based on the current program details. The logic model must include the date that it was
completed and the agency staff and evaluation team members who contributed to writing it. The logic model will include at least these five sections:

(1) a description of clients and system conditions that led to the need for the program, (2) the inputs/resources of the program, (3) major program components, (4) detailed activities/outputs, (5) expected client outcomes

C: Internal Review of Program Materials

The team will review and summarize relevant information from the program manual, curricula, how the program currently tracks activities and measures outcomes, the theory (ies) related to the program design and previous evaluation efforts done at the agency. Include a brief history of the program: what inspired it, when it began, how it may have changed over time. This is 2-4 pages in length.

D: Literature Review

A 3-4 page literature review (minimum of 10 articles) of evaluations done with similar client populations and similar programs (or services). The team will summarize evaluation and research relevant to both the population and to the program services. They will identify other programs locally, nationally or internationally with similar populations and/or services and learn more about evaluation efforts conducted at these organizations. As many programs are unique, it is likely that no one program or evaluation of a program will be exactly the same. The results of the search should be to understand how other organizations are measuring success, activities and program fidelity; what kind of results they have, what tools (standardized or custom) are used for measuring results, and what considerations are necessary for cultural competence in this evaluation.

Part 2: Program Evaluation Plan (20%)

Students will design a 5-9 page Program Evaluation Plan. The components of the plan are detailed in the grading rubric and include:

(1) description of the program, the purpose of the evaluation and evaluation approach, (2) type of evaluation and key evaluation questions, (3) evaluation design, (4) data collection plan (5) data analysis plan, (6) plan for reporting and utilizing the results, (7) cost for evaluation implementation, (8) timelines and responsibilities

Special Note regarding Data Collection: Part of devising a data collection plan is to cull the professional literature and conduct internet searches to find a standardized evaluation tool that can be used for your evaluation and/or find custom tools used in other organizations. The professional literature review may also speak to sampling techniques and data collection methods used with similar evaluations or populations. Following this review, the project team, in conjunction with the client agency, will determine if a standardized tool fits the needs of the evaluation. If there is no appropriate tool, the project team will design a survey, interview protocol, focus group script or observation tool for their project in accordance with the project evaluation plan and informed by the literature or the work done at other agencies. All customize student created surveys must be approved by professor prior to use in the field.
Part 3: Evaluation Report (20%)  
Students will write an 8-10 page evaluation report for client agency stakeholders. The sections of the evaluation report are 1) Executive Summary, 2) Background and Purpose, 3) Evaluation Methods, 4) Results, 5) Discussion and Recommendations. After gathering necessary data, students will use either Excel or SPSS to complete data entry and analysis using descriptive statistics, frequencies, and mandatory bi-variate analysis. Output will be generated to answer key evaluation questions. Data analysis can be conducted on data previously collected by the client agency. The report should adhere to the grading rubric and include agency background, evaluation question and design, findings and recommendations. Graphics and bi-variate analysis and statistical tests are expected.

Part 4: Presentation of Project to the Class (5%)  
In the last class, students will present project process, deliverables, key findings using statistics/charts and evaluation lessons learned using power point slides. Presentation will be 15 minutes in length and will include time for questions.

Part 5: Group Process Reflection and Individual Effort (5%)  
Team members complete evaluations of each team member, forms are found in C-tool teamwork folder. Following the presentation to the class, members review with each other their feedback on working together as a team and turn in completed forms to the instructor.

NOTE: If students have prior experience with the assignments listed above, they can propose an alternative learning assignment to substitute for one or more of the assignments described in this syllabus. Assignment substitutions request must be done in advance by week three.

Extra Credit: Dissemination of Results to the Client (5 points added to score)  
Students can present the results of the evaluation to client agency stakeholders. Using powerpoint slides or handouts, the team would cover agency background, evaluation question(s), design, data collection, findings and recommendations. Instructor should review the presentation prior. These can be completed during exam week when class will not be scheduled. Email or letter from the person who received the results is required.

ASSIGNMENT SUBMISSION SCHEDULE

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<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
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<th>final date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PEERRS Certification</td>
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<td>5/27</td>
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<tr>
<td>Part 1: Client Engagement and Competency Development</td>
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<tr>
<td>Part 2 – Evaluation Plan</td>
<td>6/10</td>
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<td>Part 4&amp;5– Presentation to Class &amp; teamwork reflection</td>
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<td>7/22</td>
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<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Individual assignments</td>
<td>ongoing</td>
<td>7/15</td>
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If an evaluation team needs to deviate from the submission schedule above, prior approval is required by the instructor.
TEXTS

REQUIRED


OTHER TEXT RESOURCES (available at the Graduate Library)


SESSIONS, LEARNING TOPICS, & READINGS

All readings are available in the course c-tools site in the RESOURCE -Readings folder. Readings are organized by session number. Be advised that topics and assigned reading may changed.

May 13 Session 1: Evaluation-The Whole Picture

Topics: Introducing the course and project; distinguishing evaluation from research, ethics standard, review of student experiences and interest, types of evaluation, steps in evaluation and sample evaluation plans.

- CDC Evaluation Manual
- Evaluation plan samples (c-tools)
- Other resources:

May 20 Session 2: Stakeholder Engagement & Logic Models

Topics: building relationships with client agency, developing logic models, review of group project part one

- Royce, Chapter 1 & 2, Royce pp. 108-112 (on logic models)
- Evaluation in Focus small groups-ethics & inclusion:
May 27 Session 3: Evaluation Planning

Topics: review part 2(evaluation plan), types of evaluation, evaluation design, evaluation question, qualitative methods

- Royce Chapters 3,4, 5
- Webinar: Developing an Evaluation Plan, Capacity for Health
  http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7ca_sY-BrR0 (retrieved on July 9, 2012)
- Evaluation in Focus small groups-Participatory:

- Other recommended
  - Royce 15: Writing Evaluation Proposals, Reports and Journal Articles
  - Formative Assessment Webinar with Case study HIV+ Capacity for Health Webinar
  http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NwRRnhp7d1g&feature=relmfu (58 minutes)

June 3 Session 4: Evaluation Design con’t

Topics: sources of information, design rigor, sampling, measurement, finding standardized tools, more qualitative

- Royce Chapter 9: Group Research Design
- Royce Chapter 11: Measurement Tools & Strategies; skim Chapter 11-Instruments
- Evaluation in Focus groups-Needs Assessment
- Other recommended
  - Royce Chapter 6 Single System design


o Community Tool Box- Conducting Focus Groups – http://ctb.ku.edu/en/tablecontents/sub_section_main_1018.aspx

o Community Toolbox focus group example http://ctb.ku.edu/en/tablecontents/sub_section_examples_1018.aspx

o LAMP Focus Group - http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_s5M-zWnsJs

o How to Run an Effective Focus Group – http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=selwAVm2tk4

o FOCUS GROUPS FORMS AND SAMPLES (c-tools site)

o QUALITATIVE INTERVIEWING (c-tools site)

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**June 10 Session 5:**

**Topics:** measurement tools con’t, statistical test selection

**Evaluation in focus:** Process evaluations


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**June 17 Session 6: Data Entry, Client Satisfaction survey**

**Topics:** setting up your database, data entry, data cleaning, variability

Royce Chapter 7

- Evaluation in Focus-client satisfaction


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**June 24 Session 7: Univariate Analysis & Process evaluation**

**Topics:** fidelity, drift, quality assurance, review Part 3

**Evaluation in Focus-Fidelity, Monitoring**

Royce Chapter 13 & 14


Other recommended
  o How to use Excel for data analysis WEBINAR retrieved on June 25, 2011 at http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z16A63Hsqz0&feature=relmfu 58 minutes

July 1 Session 8: Bivariate analysis & outcome evaluation
Topics: choosing statistical tests, data analysis with sample data
Royce Chapter 14 & 15
Evaluation in Focus-Outcome
  o Yeh, Christine J; Ching, Alison M; Okubo, Yuki; Luthar, Suniya S (2007). Development of a mentoring program for Chinese immigrant adolescents’ cultural adjustment. Adolescence; Winter 2007; 42, 168; pg. 738-747

July 8 Session 9: Data Visualization & Outcome Evaluation
Topics: presenting your data, charts, graphs, review Part 4, group consultation in data analysis
Evaluation in Focus-Outcome evaluation

July 15 Session 10: Presentation & Cost Effectiveness/Cost Benefit Evaluation
Topics: good presentations, group consultation time on data analysis and reporting, review Part 5
Evaluation in Focus-outcome evaluation
  • Other recommended
    o Business Promotion: Cost Benefit Analysis of Online Course Evaluations.wmv http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PMcgFJ0aJkC (3 minutes)
    o Cost Benefit Analysis-3 minute crash course http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qt8HNNWIV-c (3 minutes)

July 22 Session 11: Final Reports
Topics: Groups present their reports and lessons learned, course feedback to the instructor
LEO Lecturers’ Employee Organization, Local 6244, AFL-CIO