COURSE TITLE: Evaluation in Social Work
COURSE NUMBER: 683
SECTION: Wednesday 9AM-12PM
CREDIT HOURS: 3
PREREQUISITES: SW522 or permission of instructor

Contact Information
Elizabeth Thomason, PhD, MSW
E-mail: lizzyb@umich.edu
Phone: (734) 615-2107
Office Hours: 8AM-10AM Tuesdays and by appointment
SSW Offices: B648 (Curtis Center/lower level)

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.

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:

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.
Course Design
The course will use multiple pedagogical methods including short lectures, active and reflective learning, case examples, and experiential exercises. To promote active and reflective learning, students will apply course concepts during in-class lab time and engage in self-reflection during in-class discussion. Guest presenters will address course topics such as ethical issues, participatory evaluation and client engagement, and other topics.

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 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):
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 inter-cultural 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).

RELEVANT POLICIES
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

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.
Academic Integrity and Plagiarism: We adhere to the LS&A statement on academic integrity: “The LSA undergraduate academic community, like all communities, functions best when its members treat one another with honesty, fairness, respect, and trust. The College holds all members of its community to high standards of scholarship and integrity. To accomplish its mission of providing an optimal educational environment and developing leaders of society, the College promotes the assumption of personal responsibility and integrity and prohibits all forms of academic dishonesty and misconduct. Academic dishonesty may be understood as any action or attempted action that may result in creating an unfair academic advantage for oneself or an unfair academic advantage or disadvantage for any other member or members of the academic community. Conduct, without regard to motive, that violates the academic integrity and ethical standards of the College community cannot be tolerated. The College seeks vigorously to achieve compliance with its community standards of academic integrity. Violations of the standards will not be tolerated and will result in serious consequences and disciplinary action.”

Plagiarism is cheating. Any student caught plagiarizing or cheating in any way will earn a failing grade in this course and may be expelled from The University of Michigan. There are no exceptions. Please make sure that you understand what constitutes plagiarism or cheating.

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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<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Minimum Score</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A+</td>
<td>100</td>
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<td>A</td>
<td>94-99</td>
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<td>A-</td>
<td>90-93</td>
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<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>87-89</td>
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<td>B</td>
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<td>B-</td>
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<tr>
<td>C+</td>
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<td>C-</td>
<td>70-73</td>
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<td>&lt;69 (no credit)</td>
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TEXTS

REQUIRED

All article readings are available in the course e-tools site in the READINGS folder.
Assignments and due dates

Attendance, participation, and discussion questions (15 pts)  Weekly
Each student is required to generate at least one question/comment each week based on the readings and to post these to the CTools chat room by 5 PM on Monday. Attendance in class is expected. All students are expected to have read the weekly readings and contribute to the class discussion.

Discussion facilitation and reflection paper (10 points)  Sign up for one week
This assignment aims to enhance students’ knowledge base and communications skills in evaluating social work practice. It also encourages students’ critical thinking about course concepts and how they related to evaluation of social work practice. The assignment has 2 parts:

1) (5 points) Two to three students will generate discussion questions based on the week’s readings to facilitate a whole class discussion. Ideas for discussion questions may be found at the end of each textbook chapter and may also be generated through writing the reflective statement. Classmates’ questions and comments may also serve as a valuable source for discussion topics. Students will sign up on the first day of class. Student-led discussions will occur on September 10, 17, 24, October 8, 15, 22, 29, November 12, 19, 26.

2) (5 points) Each student facilitator will independently write and submit a 1 page single-spaced, reflective statement on the readings assigned for that class session. Reflections should not summarize readings, but rather connect the readings to social work practice, students’ field placement experiences, and the use of evaluation in social work. Guidelines for this reflective statement can be found at the end of this syllabus. The reflective statement is due the same day the student facilitates.

Evaluation client interview and memo (10 pts)  Due September 24
This assignment aims to introduce students to participatory evaluation and client engagement. This assignment enhances students’ oral and written communication skills while providing an opportunity to gather information necessary to successfully plan an evaluation. Students also begin developing skills needed to collaborate with clients and incorporate their perspective into the evaluation process.

Students will be required to interview their client to inform their evaluation plan. Clients will typically be the director or key staff person responsible for overseeing the intervention, program or service that students have selected for their evaluation plan. Interviews can be completed in person, over the phone, or via email. It is anticipated that client interviews will take 60 minutes. After completing the client interview, students will be required to write a memo summarizing what they learned and how it impacted their evaluation plan, if at all. The memo should be about 2 single-spaced pages. Memos should include the following information:

- The client’s perspective of evaluation needs (e.g., the purpose of an evaluation from client perspective)
- A description of the intervention, program, or service to be evaluation (e.g., is it model-driven or was it developed within the agency/organization?; what are eligibility criteria for consumers/the target population?)
- The type of evaluation – options and what fits best with developmental state of intervention, program, or service
- Outcomes that are important to the client and existing outcomes measured by intervention, program, or service
- The agency’s desire and/or capacity to sustain evaluation activities
- How the client interview changed students’ evaluation plan, if at all
Logic model (10 pts)  
Due October 8
This assignment aims to enhance students’ analytical skills in planning and designing evaluations in social work. Students will be required to conceptualize the intervention, program, or service that will be the focus of their evaluation plan using logic modeling. The logic model should include:

- The theory of change or assumptions underlying the intervention, program, or service
- Inputs or resources
- Activities (e.g., tasks, actions, and events undertaken to change, prevent, or treat the problem or need)
- Outputs (e.g., tangible products resulting from activities)
- Outcomes (e.g., positive consequences of the intervention, program or service for clients) that may be defined as short-term, intermediate, and long-term

Evaluation plan (15 pts)  
Sign up for one week
This assignment aims to provide students with research methods and analytic skills as well as professional writing skills needed to plan and design evaluations in social work. Each student will design a Program Evaluation Plan. 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 assignment has 2 parts:

1) (5 points) Each student will present the proposed evaluation plan to the class in a 10 minute presentation. The class will serve as the client/community and provide feedback to the student. Students will sign up on the first day of class. Evaluation plan presentations will occur on October 22, October 29, and November 5.

2) (10 points) Each student will write and submit a 2-3 page single-spaced evaluation plan that incorporates instructor and class feedback from the presentation. The evaluation plan is due 1 week after the presentation.

Group data analysis and evaluation report (15 pts)  
Due November 19
This assignment aims to provide students experience conducting statistical analysis in SPSS and professional writing skills in reporting results. The instructor will provide students with data. On November 5, in small groups, students will conduct data analysis in SPSS, including descriptive statistics and mean comparisons. All analytic techniques will be demonstrated in class. Each group will be required to write up their results and submit one report per group.

Final exam (25 pts)  
December 3
To assess attainment of course objectives, Social Work Competencies, and advanced practice behaviors, a multiple-choice exam will be administered to students on the last class. Students are allowed to bring one 8.5 by 11 inch piece of paper with notes on it.
Class schedule and topic outline:

**Week 1, September 3**  Introductions, course overview, evaluation basics

Readings:
In Royse: Chapter 1 (pp. 1-33)
NASW Code of Ethics, section 5.02 Research and Evaluation.

**Week 2, September 10**  Participatory evaluation, client engagement, needs assessment

Guest Presenter: Sue Ann Savas, MSW, Clinical Assistant Professor and Curtis Center Program Evaluation Group Director

Readings:
In Royse: Chapter 3 (pp. 55-82), pp. 99-100, pp. 103-104

**Week 3, September 17**  Logic models, evaluation planning, client memo questions

Guest Presenter: Jeremy Gaertner, MSW, Evaluation Associate, Curtis Center Program Evaluation Group

Readings:
In Royse: pp. 108-11
Capacity 4 Health. *Developing an evaluation plan.* 1-5.
W. K. Kellogg Foundation Logic Model Development Guide, Chapters 1-2, pp. 1-26)

**Week 4, September 24**  Formative and process evaluation, logic model questions

Readings:
In Royse: Chapter 5 (pp. 112-121)
Week 5, October 1  Ethics, cultural competence, logic model questions

Guest Presenter:  Adam Mrdjenovich, PhD, UM Institutional Review Board
Megan Williams, MSW, Evaluation Associate, Curtis Center Program Evaluation Group

Readings:
In Royse: Chapter 2 (pp. 34-54), pp. 332-334
AEA statement on cultural competence, pp. 1-10

Week 6, October 8  Qualitative and mixed methods

Guest Presenter:  Laura Sundstrom, MSW, Evaluation Associate, Curtis Center Program Evaluation Group

Readings:
In Royse: Chapter 4 (pp. 83-107)

Week 7, October 15  Sampling, research design, evaluation plan questions

Readings:
In Royse: Chapter 8 and 9 (pp. 194-242)

Week 8, October 22  Measurement tools and strategies, evaluation plan presentations

Readings:
In Royse: Chapter 11 (pp. 271-300)

Week 9, October 29  Program monitoring, quality assurance, customer satisfaction surveys, evaluation plan presentations

Readings:
In Royse: Chapter 5 (pp. 121-137), Chapter 7 (pp. 175-193)

Week 10, November 5  Data analysis and statistics, SPSS, evaluation plan presentations

Readings:
In Royse: Chapter 14 (pp. 341-372)
Week 11, November 12     Data interpretation and report writing

Guest presenter: John Seeley, PhD, Associate Director, Curtis Center Program Evaluation Group
Jeremy Gaertner, MSW, Evaluation Associate, Curtis Center Program Evaluation Group

Readings:
In Royse: Chapter 15 (pp. 373-391)
Casey Family Programs. (2014). The potential for cost savings from home visiting due to reductions in child maltreatment (Policy brief), 3-9.

Week 12, November 19     Building agency capacity, working with agencies, pragmatic issues

Guest presenters: TBD

Readings:
In Royse: Chapter 13 (pp. 317-331)

Week 13, November 26     Cost effectiveness and analysis, exam review

Readings:
In Royse: Chapter 10 (pp. 255-270)

Week 14, December 3     Exam
### Worksheet for Reflective Statement on Weekly Readings

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<tr>
<th><strong>Tasks:</strong> How might this assignment inform what you do in your placement and/or what you plan to do in your future social work career?</th>
<th><strong>Skills:</strong> Identify any evaluation skills you acquired as a result of completing this assignment.</th>
<th><strong>Barriers:</strong> What challenges, if any, might you face in applying what you learned this assignment in your placement and/or future social work career?</th>
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