COURSE TITLE: Evaluation in Social Work
COURSE NUMBER: 683 (Fall, 2015, Section 001, Class#13922
TIME & PLACE: Monday 6:00-9:00pm, Room B770, 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: Monday: 5:15pm-6:00pm 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 09/03/2014.

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:

1. Identify and choose the type of evaluation that is appropriate to answer questions consonant with a program’s developmental stage. (Practice Behaviors 6.CO, 6.IP, 6.MHS, 6.SPE, 10.d.CO, 10.d.IP, 10.d.MHS, 10.d.SPE)


3. Recognize and apply evaluation and data collection methods that are appropriate to the evaluation context. (Practice Behaviors 6.CO, 6.IP, 6.MHS, 6.SPE)


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. (Practice Behaviors 6.CO, 6.IP, 6.MHS, 6.SPE)

6. Critically examine existing evaluation studies for their consistency with the values reflected in the curricular themes. (Practice Behaviors 6.CO, 6.IP, 6.MHS, 6.SPE, 10.d.CO, 10.d.IP, 10.d.MHS, 10.d.SPE)

Course Design

The course will use multiple pedagogical methods: short lectures, participatory discussions, written assignments, student presentations, and experiential exercises. Guest speakers may be invited to address special topics.

Theme Relation to Social Justice

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.

Theme Relation to Behavioral and Social Science Research

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.

Relationship to SW 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 undergird 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).

**Intensive Focus on 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.

**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](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 Canvas/assignments. Follow these rubrics to complete assignments. Group assignments are submitted digitally and due at the beginning of class. You are required to submit a draft for review prior to submitting the final version of most assignments 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:

\[
\begin{align*}
A+ & \quad 98-100 \\
A & \quad 94-97 \\
A- & \quad 91-93 \\
B+ & \quad 87-90 \\
B & \quad 84-86 \\
B- & \quad 81-83 \\
C+ & \quad 77-80 \\
C & \quad 74-76 \\
C- & \quad 70-73 \\
D & \quad <69 \text{ (no credit)}
\end{align*}
\]

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.

ASSIGNMENTS

1. Individual practice & application activities: 30%
2. Participation: 10%
3. Evaluation group project: 60%

1. **Individual Activities (30%)**
Each week student complete practice on-line modules, worksheets &/or activities. Some are done during class time, others as homework. Each is worth 3 points/3%. In-class work eligible for credit is identified in the presentation slides each week and found in the homework module in Canvas. The assignment must be turned in on time. If you miss a class session, you are responsible for completing the assignment within one week. Below is a sample of list of some assignments.

   a) PEERRS Certification in Human Subjects Social and Behavioral *(required).* All students must have current certification. 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/](http://my.research.umich.edu/peerrs/)

   b) Evaluation questions on-line module *(required)*
      a. Types of evaluation on-line module *(required)*
      b. Evaluation rigor on-line module *(required)*
      c. Sampling on-line module *(required)*
      d. Tools on-line module *(required)*
      e. Statistical test selections on-line module *(required)*

   c) Sample Data Analysis, descriptive or inferential *(either the descriptive or inferential is required)*

   d) Short worksheets *(complete two or more from this list)*
      a. Logic Model and Evaluation Questions Practice
      b. Data source exploration
      c. Evaluation design
      d. Sampling and tool selection

   e) Skills presentation *(optional):* 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 (10%)**
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 15-20 minute small group discussion to focus on a particular type of evaluation and/or aspects of evaluation. Students will read a journal article and share key learning points with each other. Use the case study review guide and discussion questions to prepare for the discussion. 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 human services agency. Class time is structured to build knowledge and skills around this. Students work in small groups to complete evaluation projects. The scope of the project shall be appropriate for a beginning level evaluation team and is approved by this instructor. Students will select an agency with which they are familiar and that is interested in an evaluation project. As a team the group will interview the client agency to determine their evaluation needs. Teams will maintain regular contact with their agency staff person to manage evaluation expectations of the agency, logistics and practical matters for the project. Each person from the team should visit the agency and meet staff (and potentially clients) at least once during the semester. Most will go a handful of times to learn and gather data for their project, and insure that the evaluation project meets the organization’s expectations.

The team will develop a work plan to complete the project, develop their competencies specific to this evaluation, write an evaluation plan, collect & analysis data, write an evaluation report and complete a presentation. Within the team, each person will take the lead for one major component of the project. The team completes a workplan for the entire project early in the semester to fairly divide the work, set timelines and responsibilities. Time is allotted during each classroom session for evaluation teams to meet and have individual consultation time with the instructor. You will likely meet as a group outside of class.

Assignments will be single spaced, presented in a professional format, not academic. All are submitted in Canvas through Assignments. Any deviations from the assignment list must be approved by the instructor. The grading rubrics, found in the assignment section, detail the specifics of each part of this assignment. Team members should make sure to review the rubrics prior to creating their workplan to better under the details of each assignment.
Part One: Evaluation Preparation (10%)

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

A: Program Specification-Logic Model (one page)

Submit an up-to-date Logic Model for the service or program component that the team is evaluating. 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. 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

B: Preliminary evaluation questions: what evaluation need will your project meet? What are your preliminary evaluation questions?

C. Internal Review of Program Materials (2-4 pages)

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.

C: Literature Review (3-4 pages)

A literature review with a minimum of 10 scholarly journal citations is required. The team will seek articles about evaluations done with similar client populations and similar programs (or services). The lit review should aid the team in developing appropriate evaluations questions, their evaluation design and data collection tools. 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. Most importantly, describe how this is relevant to your evaluation project and what you can use from this.

Make sure your lit review includes 3-5 evaluations done with similar programs/services or populations. This will be helpful in developing your evaluation plan. The review should identify their:

a. Evaluation design
b. sampling techniques  
c. data collected tools  
d. what was learned in the evaluation  
e. how these inform your evaluation plan

Part 2: Program Evaluation Plan (20%)

Students will design a 5-9 page Program Evaluation Plan. The plan should have a profession focus, rather than academic, and be written for the stakeholders of the evaluation. 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 (9)appendix with informed consent, survey tool (if applicable and data collection protocols.

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 data collection 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 to 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, 6) Appendix. After gathering necessary data, students will use Excel, SPSS or other program to complete data entry and analysis using descriptive statistics, frequencies, and mandatory multivariate 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 multivariate 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 are 15 minutes in length and 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 Canvas team tools 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.

ASSIGNMENT SUBMISSION SCHEDULE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment Description</th>
<th>Draft Date</th>
<th>Final Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PEERRS Certification-Human Subjects Social and Behavioral</td>
<td>9/28</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part 1: Evaluation preparation</td>
<td>10/12</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part 2 – Evaluation plan</td>
<td>10/12 or 19</td>
<td>11/2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part 3 – Evaluation report</td>
<td>11/30</td>
<td>12/14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part 4 &amp; 5 – Presentation to class &amp; Teamwork reflection</td>
<td>12/14</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual assignments</td>
<td>ongoing</td>
<td>12/7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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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 Canvas/modules by week number. Be advised that topics and assigned reading may changed.

Sept 14, Session 1: Evaluation-The Whole Picture

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

- CDC Evaluation Manual
- Evaluation plan samples
- optional resources:

Sept 21 Session 2: Stakeholder Engagement & Logic Models

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

- evaluation modules-evaluation questions
- Royce, 2-ethics in eval, Royce pp. 108-112 (on logic models)
- Evaluation in Focus small groups-ethics & inclusion:

Sept 28 Session 3: Evaluation Planning

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

- evaluation modules -types and design rigor
- Royce Chapters 3,4, 5
- Webinar: Developing an Evaluation Plan, Capacity for Health [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7ca_sY-BrR0](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7ca_sY-BrR0) (retrieved on July 9, 2012)
- Evaluation in Focus small groups-Participatory:
Research September 10: 244-259

- 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](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NwRRnhp7d1g&feature=relmfu) (58 minutes)

Oct 5 Session 4: Evaluation Design con’t
Topics: sources of information, design rigor, sampling, measurement, finding standardized tools, more qualitative
- evaluation modules-sampling methods and data collection methods
- Royce Chapter 8-sampling, 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

Oct 12 Session 5: Topics: measurement tools con’t
Evaluation in focus: Process evaluations

**Oct 19—no class, UM mid-semester break**

**Oct 26 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
  
  

**Nov 2 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**

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

**Nov 9 Session 8: Bivariate analysis**

*Topics*: choosing statistical tests, data analysis with sample data  
*Royce Chapter 14 & 15*

**Nov 16 Session 9: Outcome evaluation**

*Evaluation in Focus-Outcome*


**Nov 23 Session 10: Bivariate analysis & outcome evaluation cont’d**
Nov 30 Session 11: Data Visualization & more Outcome Evaluation

Topics: presenting your data, charts, graphs, review Part 4, group consultation in data analysis Evaluation in Focus-Outcome evaluation


December 7 Session 11: 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

- Business Promotion: Cost Benefit Analysis of Online Course Evaluations.wmv
  http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PMcgFJ0aJkc (3 minutes)
- Cost Benefit Analysis-3 minute crash course
  http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qt8HNWWlV-c (3 minutes)

Dec 14 Session 12: Final Reports

Topics: Groups present their reports and lessons learned, course feedback to the instructor

LEO Lecturers’ Employee Organization, Local 6244, AFL-CIO