## I. COURSE CONTENT & DESCRIPTION

This course will focus on the use of quantitative and qualitative research methods to monitor and evaluate social services. Students will develop skills in choosing and implementing appropriate evaluation strategies and designs to answer policy and practice questions. Emphasis will be placed on how to select and construct measures and assess their reliability and validity. Students will assess service needs of target populations and communities, monitor the implementation and operation of social welfare programs, and evaluate their impact. Opportunities will be provided to obtain practical experience in data collection, interpretation, presentation and dissemination of evaluation results.

### Course Content

The purpose of this course is to develop students’ abilities to use evaluation methods to describe real world situations in social work settings and to make inferences based on that information in order to improve social policy decisions and service delivery programs. Students will develop skills to identify the focus and purpose of the evaluation activities; identify and generate the kind and content of the information needed to meet the purposes for the evaluation; identify and assess the intended sources for the desired information; identify, assess, develop, and pilot the measures or instruments to be used for the evaluation; describe, select, and apply appropriate types of statistical and/or theoretical analyses and the general techniques to be used in the analysis; identify the types of information liable to result from the analysis; assess and implement additional factors in the evaluation design (e.g. timetables, standards to be used in judging the results of the evaluation, logistics, and client privacy); and develop reporting and utilization strategies.
**Course Objectives**

Upon completion of the course, students will be able to:

1. Specify goals and objectives for evaluating the effectiveness of programs and practices for individual clients, as well as for aggregates of program participants.
2. Demonstrate knowledge of the concepts of measurement, reliability, and validity; use these concepts for selecting variables for evaluation.
3. Devise basic designs for evaluation, and contrast their relative advantages and disadvantages to other designs.
4. Identify the issues involved in generalizing evaluation results, and devise representative sampling plans and replications for evaluating practices and programs.
5. Generate evaluation reports using the criteria and concepts above.
6. Discuss common ethical concerns related to program evaluation.

**Course Design**

This course will include a range of pedagogical methods—short lectures, participatory discussions, written assignments, student presentations, and experiential exercises. Students are encouraged to engage fully in this course. This includes asking questions, sharing pertinent experiences during lectures, and relating lecture material to relevant practical situations. Attendance and participation are critical to these forms of instruction. The extent of computer use and use of statistical packages throughout this course will be determined by the individual student when conducting analyses for research projects.

**II. Curricular Themes**

**Theme Relation to Multiculturalism & Diversity**

Students will develop the capacity to identify ways in which the diversity dimensions “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 and are impacted by various methods of program evaluation.

**Theme Relation to Social Justice**

The ability to assess policies and programs analytically is necessary if the social work profession is to play an important role in shaping the outcome of ongoing program and policy debates that reflect issues in social justice and change. This course will provide students with the capacity to understand and influence the role that methods of program evaluation play in the formation and implementation of policy, practice, and program development.
Theme Relation to Promotion, Prevention, Treatment & Rehabilitation
Prevention, promotion, treatment, and rehabilitation activities are difficult to evaluate, and therefore, raise special challenges in statistical analysis. Students will be exposed to models of program evaluation (e.g., empowerment designs, envelope analysis, responsive evaluations, and reflective focus group techniques), which have particular utility as methods to evaluate promotion, prevention, treatment, and rehabilitation oriented social services.

Theme Relation to Behavioral and Social Science Research
This course will focus on how to identify statistical methods that optimize a combination of rigor and feasibility. Students will examine the ways in which social science data is translated into current policy and practice and the consequences, both positive and negative. This course will provide students with the capacity to understand and influence the ways in which program evaluation methods impact the formation and implementation of social service programs.

Relationship to SW Ethics and Values
Ethical standards of social work practice (NASW Code of Ethics) and evaluation practice (Program Evaluation Standards) as well as ethical standards for federally funded research will be reviewed as issues that evaluators may be confronted with in program/policy evaluation.

III. CLASS TEXTS

Required

**Additional required readings will be assigned and made available on Canvas**

Recommended
IV. METHODS OF EVALUATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evaluation Component</th>
<th>Weight</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class Attendance &amp; Participation</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Needs Assessment</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Logic Model</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation Proposal Part I</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Evaluation Proposal</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer evaluation</td>
<td>5%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Group Presentation</td>
<td>15%</td>
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**Grading.**
A 100-point system is used. Points earned will be translated into letter grades at the end of the semester according to the following formula:

- A+ 97-100
- A 94-94
- A- 91-93
- B+ 88-90
- B 84-87
- B- 81-83
- C+ 77-80
- C 74-76
- C- 70-73
- D <=69 (no credit)

Incompletes are not granted unless it can be demonstrated that it would be unfair to hold the students to the normal expectations for 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.

**Deadlines.**
Students are expected to complete assignments on time. All written assignments are due at the beginning of class on the day specified. All late assignments will result in a deduction of 2 points per calendar day, and they will be accepted up to 3 calendar days late only under extraordinary circumstances. Assignments will not be accepted via email unless they are submitted as a late paper or prior arrangements have been made with the instructor. In-class presentations (group activities & presentations) cannot be made up due to student absence except under extreme extenuating circumstances and prior consultation with the instructor.

**Students experiencing any difficulty should consult with the instructor as soon as possible.**
Class Attendance and Participation.
All students are expected to come to class on time and prepared. Class attendance and participation will be graded and taken consideration in final grades. Excessive absences (more than 2) will result in a lower grade. Students are expected to attend class every day and self-monitor their attendance on the attendance log.

**Please review the Policy on Class Attendance found in the MSW Student Guide**

Learning Needs and Disabilities.
Students with special 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 of Students with Disabilities office at G664 Haven Hall, 734-763-3000.

Religious Holiday Policies.
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 for observing religious holidays. The official UM policy on religious holidays and a list of possible conflicts with classes can be found at:
https://www.provost.umich.edu/calendar/religious_holidays18-19.html#conflicts

Additional School and University policies, information and resources are available here:
https://ssw.umich.edu/standard-policies-information-resources. They include:

- Safety and emergency preparedness
- Mental health and well-being
- Teaching evaluations
- Proper use of names and pronouns
- Accommodations for students with disabilities
- Religious/spiritual observances
- Military deployment
- Writing skills and expectations
- Academic integrity and plagiarism
V. Class Schedule
The following schedule is subject to modification at the instructor’s discretion. Additional article readings may be announced weekly in class or via Canvas (email).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week/Assignment Due</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Required Readings</th>
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</table>
| Week 1 (1/10)        | Syllabus and course overview Introduction | • Syllabus  
• Newcomer, Chapter 1 |
| Week 2 (1/17)        | Types of evaluation, ethical considerations Plan a culturally responsive evaluation | • Newcomer, Chapter 4 & 12  
• Royse, Chapter 12  
• Preskill & Russ-Eft, Chapter 3 |
| Week 3 (1/24)        | Identify stakeholders Understand Needs Assessment | • Newcomer, Chapter 2  
• Royse, Chapter 3 |
| Week 4 (1/31)        | Develop logic model | • Newcomer, Chapter 3  
• The W.K. Kellogg Foundation Logic Model Development Guide  
• Preskill & Russ-Eft, Chapter 4 |
| Week 5 (2/7) Due: Needs Assessment | Evaluation design | • Newcomer, Chapter 6, 7  
• Preskill & Russ-Eft, Chapter 5 |
| Week 6 (2/14)        | Evaluation design | • Newcomer, Chapter 8, 9 |
| Week 7 (2/21) Due: Logic Model | Data collection | • Newcomer, Chapter 13, 14, 15, 16, 17,  
• Preskill & Russ-Eft, Chapter 7 |
<p>| Week 8 (2/28)        | Data collection | • Newcomer, Chapter 18, 19, 20, 21 |</p>
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<tr>
<th>Week 9 (3/7)</th>
<th>Spring break, no class</th>
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<tr>
<td>Week 10 (3/14)</td>
<td>Data analysis</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Due: Proposal Part I</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 11 (3/21)</td>
<td>Data analysis</td>
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| Week 12 (3/28) | Meta-analysis, systematic review  
Multisite and community-embedded evaluation design |
| Week 13 (4/4) | Contributions and limitations  
Anticipate and overcome challenges |
| Week 14 (4/12) | Cost benefits analysis, budgeting |
| **Optional: Proposal Part II** | |
| Week 15 (4/18) | Communicate, report evaluation process and findings |
| Week 16 (4/25) | Reflecting on learning  
Group presentation |
| **Due: Full Proposal** | **Preskill & Russ-Eft, Chapter 7** |

**Assignments.** Detailed instructions on each assignment will be provided in class where students will have opportunities to ask questions. The optional due date (4/12) for Proposal II is offered for students who are interested in receiving feedback from the instructor before turn in their final product on 4/25.
Name _____________________________________________

The definition of attended a class session is your presence for the entire session (arriving neither more than 15 minutes late nor leaving more than 15 minutes early). You are expected to attend all classes. The instructor should be notified in advance of any planned absence and as soon as possible in the case of an unforeseen emergency.

Please record your presence or absence for each class day. This record is due on the last day of class.

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<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Attended? (circle response)</th>
<th>Comments</th>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1/10</td>
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<td>Late</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>1/17</td>
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<td>3</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>1/31</td>
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<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>4/28</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Late</td>
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I certify that the above is a true reporting of my class attendance.

________________________________________________         _________________________
Signature                                             Date
I have read, understand, and agree to follow the rules and guidelines outlined in this syllabus for Program Evaluation, SW685 (Winter 2019).

Name ________________

Signature ________________

Date ________________