



### Course Syllabus

<b>Course title:</b>	<b>Program Evaluation and Social Work</b>
<b>Course #/term:</b>	SW 683 14 Spring/Summer 2021
<b>Time and place:</b>	Tuesdays, 1pm-5pm, Room <b>ZOOM!</b> [See Canvas]
<b>Credit hours:</b>	3
<b>Instructor:</b>	Katie Doyle
<b>Pronouns:</b>	She/her/hers
<b>Contact info:</b>	<b>E-mail:</b> <a href="mailto:doylekg@umich.edu">doylekg@umich.edu</a>
	<i>When you email me, please include SW 683 in the subject line</i>
<b>Cell:</b>	See Canvas
<b>Office hours:</b>	Mondays ~3:00 on Zoom or by appointment via Zoom, FaceTime or Phone

**Table of Contents** (These are hyperlinked for easy access)

<b>The Online Classroom</b> .....	2
Teaching philosophy.....	1
Classroom Climate.....	1
Inclusive Language .....	2
Land Acknowledgment.....	2
About SW 683: Evaluation in Social Work.....	2
Course Description.....	2
Course Content .....	3
Course Objectives.....	3
Course Design.....	3
Theme Relation to Multiculturalism & Diversity .....	3
Theme Relation to Social Justice .....	3
Theme Relation to Promotion, Prevention, Treatment & Rehabilitation.....	4
Theme Relation to Behavioral and Social Science Research.....	4
Relationship to SW Ethics and Values .....	4
Intensive Focus on PODS.....	4
Textbook & other readings .....	4
<b>Web Modules:</b> <a href="https://ssw.umich.edu/my-ssw/msw-forms/modules">https://ssw.umich.edu/my-ssw/msw-forms/modules</a> .....	4
Class schedule .....	5
Assignments.....	7
Logic Model .....	7
Evaluation Planning Quiz .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
Data Visualization Slides .....	8
Group Project: Presentation and Slide Deck.....	8
Grading.....	8
Course Engagement .....	8
Late Assignments.....	8
Grade Dispute Process.....	9
Additional Course Information and Resources.....	9

## The Online Classroom

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### **Definitions**

#### **Online Synchronous = “Same time-different place”**

We are all accessing the same platform(s) at the same time and—to the extent possible—we are interacting with each other verbally, visually, in chats, and/or in collaborative spaces (like Zoom, Google Drive, Canvas, etc.).

#### **Online Asynchronous = “Different time-different place” or “On-demand”**

Students access and engage with the content and assignments at whatever time works best for them. For many, this is indistinguishable from what we traditionally think of as “homework.”

#### **In this course, there will be a blend of:**

- Online synchronous class time
- Online synchronous group time, generally during scheduled class hours
- Asynchronous group time (shared documents, texts, emails, etc.)
- Asynchronous individual time

The online classroom poses special opportunities and challenges for each of us. It is my goal to be flexible and responsive to each student’s unique needs. At the same time, my experience is that the more **interactive and engaged** we are when we are synchronous, the more we can all learn and the more relevant this course will be for you. Not everyone will have the capacity to have video and audio on for the full synchronous class times and group times, but **I urge you to consider enabling audio and video as much as possible when we are together, and especially in small groups.**

## Teaching philosophy

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My courses are designed for students to leave with the following:

- Confidence in their ability to apply course material and concepts in settings outside of the classroom;
- A commitment to and facility with operationalizing social work Core Values in the NASW Code of Ethics;
- Enhanced capacity to confront and explore issues of social justice and how populations that traditionally have been marginalized are disproportionately negatively affected by policies, practices, and interpersonal interactions;
- Build on positive sources of power to envision and work towards social justice; work to reduce disempowerment;
- Build on indigenous knowledge/experiences of individuals, groups and communities in practice and evaluation;
- Demonstrable and recognizable skills and competencies;
- New knowledge of the subject matter, and an understanding of how to access further knowledge and resources commensurate with their professional roles and interests;
- Curiosity and a drive to continue to develop critical thinking, inquiry, and integrity.

Graduate students are adult learners, and as such I prioritize honoring your prior knowledge and experience; your contributions to the class are vital, and I make every effort to create an environment that encourages you to share your perspectives and ideas with each other, disagree with me, and shape the tenor of the course. Additionally, it is incumbent on me to understand the differential pressures and life circumstances that facilitate or constrain your learning and your engagement in the course.

## Classroom Climate

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True learning involves risk and, therefore, vulnerability. I hope that all students will work with me to create and foster a learning environment that promotes social justice, inclusion and equity. Further, this is an opportunity for all of us to engage in professional socialization, respectfulness, and broadening our mutual development of cultural humility.

Questioning and disagreeing are part of the learning process, and I encourage all of us to engage in these activities with thoughtfulness and respect. I expect the classroom to be safe, but learning and growth is often uncomfortable. There are a few times when I will engineer disagreements to foster learning, so please do not “freeze” your understanding of any of us after one or two interactions. Expect that we all have the capacity to grow and develop. Finally, if you are someone who likes to interact and engage verbally, consider “moving back” occasionally in order to open the airwaves for others to speak. Similarly, if you are someone who is reticent to speak up in class, consider “moving up” and taking a risk. Above all, this is a learning laboratory and we all will be testing out different ways of interacting and learning.

An emotionally brave class climate is important for everyone’s learning and growth. Below are a few expectations I have about our interactions in the course. This is not an exhaustive list, and I welcome suggestions for additional expectations:

- Practice “Both - And” thinking and solution seeking
- Be attuned to both **Process** and **Content**: “process” is how and when you express yourself, and “content” is what you say.

- Remember that this is a vulnerable space for you, and for others.
- We all have an amazing capacity to screw up. Do not “freeze” anyone in this space.
- Honor confidentiality.
- Be responsible to yourself and to others about what is communicated without blame or shame.
- Limit disruptions and distractions by coming to class on time, avoiding unnecessary use of electronics, and avoiding talking when others are presenting/talking.
- Notice both the **intent** and the **impact** of what you do or say. Take responsibility when your intent does not match the impact on someone else. Take notice of peoples’ intent, not just the impact of others’ communication.
- Speak from your own experience, without generalizing.
- Critique ideas, not people.
- Take responsibility for the quality of the discussion.
- Step up if you usually don’t contribute, step back if you often contribute.
- Call each other in to conversations vs. calling someone out.

I am interested in any other expectations you may have, and we will discuss in one of our first classes.

### Inclusive Language

The words we use can make the difference between forging positive connections or creating distance in our personal and professional lives. Particularly in writing, impact is more important than intent. This course provides an opportunity to discuss sensitive concepts that span a variety of disciplines, experiences, cultural communities, and learning styles in education. Increasing the inclusiveness of our language means striving to understand the ways that language often unconsciously makes assumptions about people and unintentionally reinforces dominant norms. I invite you to reflect on issues of privilege and injustice, and to acknowledge issues of ethical engagement when speaking on cultural communities that you do not identify with. As such, I ask that students consider:

- Recognizing individual gender pronoun use;
- Respecting and using contemporary and relevant language around social identities;
- Using language that recognizes varying abilities and is not ableist;
- Using language inclusive of diverse global contexts;
- Providing developmental and educational support of attendees who may be unfamiliar with inclusive language practices.

### Land Acknowledgment

The University of Michigan, named for Michigami, the world’s largest freshwater system and located in the Huron River watershed, was formed and has grown through connections with the land stewarded by Niswi Ishkodewan Anishinaabeg: The Three Fires People who are the Ojibwe, Odawa, and Potawatomi along with their neighbors the Seneca, Delaware, Shawnee and Wyandot nations. I am grateful to have the opportunity to work on this land.

### About SW 683: Evaluation in Social Work

#### Course Description

This course will cover beginning level evaluation that builds on basic 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**

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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**

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Upon completion of this 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)
2. Specify a program for evaluation and its theory of change. (Practice Behaviors 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)
4. Plan an evaluation of social work practice. (Practice Behaviors 6.SPE, 10.d.CO, 10.d.IP, 10.d.MHS)
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**

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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 Multiculturalism & Diversity**

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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.

### **Theme Relation to Social Justice**

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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.

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#### **Theme Relation to Promotion, Prevention, Treatment & Rehabilitation**

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.

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#### **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.

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#### **Relationship to SW Ethics and Values**

Ethical and value dilemmas unique to fundraising will be presented in this course. Students will be introduced to the potential conflicts of interest that can occur when several different parties are involved in raising, giving, or sharing large sums of money (e.g., intentional and unintentional deception, making decisions that are not in the best interests of the various players, fraud, and corruption). In addition, emphasis will be placed on how to choose, approach, and work with donors (e.g., who should be approached, to give how much and how, for whom, and for what purposes). Other ethical issues will also be discussed, including whether to accept what might be considered "tainted" money and how much donor choice should be permitted in the reallocation of funds raised. Although several fundraising codes of ethics are currently being created by relevant professional societies, few give clear and direct guidelines to action, making this issue of central importance to this course.

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#### **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.

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#### **Textbook & other readings**

Grinnell, R., Gabor, P., and Unrau, Y (2019) Program Evaluation for Social Workers: Foundations of Evidence-based Programs (Eighth Edition). New York: Oxford University Press.

**This book is available to read online through UM Library:**

<https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/umichigan/detail.action?docID=5703965>

Other required readings are found on Canvas.

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**Web Modules:** <https://ssw.umich.edu/my-ssw/msw-forms/modules>

Web-modules were designed to support out-of-class learning and supplement the SW683 readings.

## Class schedule

Date	Topic/Agenda	Asynchronous Work before class	Assignments to turn in/do before class
5/11	1. Introduction to Program Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review Schusterman Foundation Data Playbook</li> <li>Review: Glossary of Evaluation Terms</li> <li>Read: AEA_ Guiding Principles Brochure</li> </ul>	
5/18	2. Using Research and Evaluation to combat racism and injustice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Grinnell et al, Chapters 5-6</li> <li>READ: Power, Privilege, and Competence: Using the 2018 AEA Evaluator Competencies to Shape Socially Just Evaluation Practice</li> <li>WATCH: AEI Anti-Racism Evaluation Panel</li> <li>Kellogg LM Guide pp. 1-30</li> <li>READ/Review: Student slides from Winter 2021 course about Ann Arbor Center for Independent Living</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Discussion: Crip Camp on Netflix OR Power, Privilege and Competence video</li> <li>Discussion on Power, Privilege, and Competence: Using the 2018 AEA Evaluator Competencies to Shape Socially Just Evaluation Practice</li> </ul>
5/25	3. Logic Models and Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review sample logic models (on canvas)</li> <li>VIDEO: CART Principles</li> <li>Grinnell et al, Chapters 7 (quiz on Canvas), 15</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assignment: pick a program for your logic model.</li> <li>Ungraded Quiz: Programs</li> <li>Web-Modules: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Evaluation Questions</li> <li>Evaluation Types</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
6/1	4. Evaluation Planning, Standardized Scales	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Grinnell et al, Chapters 9, 11</li> <li>Review: Standardized Instrument Search at <a href="http://guides.lib.umich.edu/tests">http://guides.lib.umich.edu/tests</a> OR <a href="http://www.eric.ed.gov/">http://www.eric.ed.gov/</a></li> <li>POCAST: Evaluation of Youth mentoring Program</li> <li>Sample Logic Model—Northville Youth Assistance Program</li> <li>VIDEO: Professor Shawna Lee interview</li> <li><b>Optional:</b> Still confused about Logic Models? Watch “Creating and Using a Program Logic Model” video (~10 mins)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>FIND A STANDARDIZED INSTRUMENT due</li> </ul>
6/8	5. Qualitative Data Collection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>VIDEO: Conducting a focus group</li> <li>VIDEO: How do Focus Groups Work?</li> <li>VIDEO: Most Significant Change</li> <li>VIDEO SSW Sample Focus Group</li> <li>Read: Success Case Method Excerpt</li> <li><b>SKIM:</b> Davies, R. and Dart, J., (2005) Most Significant Change Technique: A</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>LOGIC MODEL DRAFT due</li> </ul>

Date	Topic/Agenda	Asynchronous Work before class	Assignments to turn in/do before class
		Guide to its Use. Pp 15-44	
6/15	6. Quantitative Data Collection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grinnell et al, Chapters 11-13</li> <li>• VIDEO: 7 tips for good survey questions: Survey Design Essentials</li> <li>• Read: Sample Demographics Survey Questions</li> <li>• PODCAST: The Power of Community-Led Data Gathering with the Center for Native American Youth</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discussion: pick 3 (only 3) Discussion Questions to Answer</li> <li>• Web-Modules: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Sampling Methods</li> <li>○ Data Collection Methods</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
6/22	7. Data Analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read: "Teaching Inferential Statistics to Social Work Students: A Decision-making Flow Chart" BEFORE the Stats Web module</li> <li>• Read: Dabbling in the Data: A Hands-on-Guide to Participatory Data Analysis</li> <li>• Grinnell et al, Chapter 20</li> <li>• Choose 1: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Knight, C. and Alarie, R. (2017). Improving Mental Health in the Community: Outcome Evaluation of a Geriatric Mental Health Day Treatment Service, <i>Clinical Gerontologist</i>, 40:2, 77-87.</li> <li><b>OR</b></li> <li>• Hsieh, C. (2006). Using client satisfaction to improve case management services for the elderly. <i>Research on Social Work Practice</i>, 16(6), 605-612.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• LOGIC MODEL FINAL DUE</li> <li>• Web-modules <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Statistical Tests</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
6/29	8. Data Visualization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evergreen, S., &amp; Metzner, C. (2013). Design principles for data visualization in evaluation. In T. Azzam &amp; S. Evergreen (Eds.), <i>Data visualization, part 2. New Directions for Evaluation</i>, 140, 5–20.</li> <li>• WATCH Dr. Stephanie Evergreen lecture on Data Visualization: <a href="https://drive.google.com/file/d/1CipJTCb671eX9JOrOUQGhvyOINUipy73/view?usp=sharing">https://drive.google.com/file/d/1CipJTCb671eX9JOrOUQGhvyOINUipy73/view?usp=sharing</a></li> <li>• Chart Chooser</li> <li>• Data Visualization Principles and Checklist</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Web-modules <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Evaluation Design Rigor</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

<b>Date</b>	<b>Topic/Agenda</b>	<b>Asynchronous Work before class</b>	<b>Assignments to turn in/do before class</b>
7/6	9. Data Visualization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>WATCH: Data Visualization Video(s) (you choose which ones you need)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Discussion: Data visualization</li> </ul>
7/13	10. Communicatin g and Reporting Culturally Responsive Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>WATCH: 7 Secrets to Good Monitoring and Evaluation (Slides for 7 Secrets video are on Canvas)</li> <li>Read: EMKF Evaluation Report Guidelines</li> <li>Read: How Can We Use Evaluation Findings to Reflect On and Adjust Our Work?</li> <li>Grinnell et al, Chapters 21</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Discussion: Find and post an evaluation report</li> <li>Data Visualization Slides due</li> </ul>
7/20	11. Synthesis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Read: Measuring Love in the Journey for Justice</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Post: Measuring Love in the Journey for Justice</li> <li>FINAL Group Report Due</li> </ul>

## Assignments

<b>Assignment</b>	<b>Due Date</b>	<b>% of grade</b>
Course Engagement: Includes engaging with the content during class and on Canvas, completing discussions, assignments, ungraded quizzes, Crip Camp, etc.	Multiple	25%
Web Modules	Multiple	10%
Logic Model (Final)		20%
Data Visualization Slides		20%
Group Report		25%
<b>Total</b>		<b>100%</b>

Students will work on assignments in class in small groups. Students will have an opportunity to gather feedback on their deliverables in class from their group members and the instructors. Individual student work products/assignments will be uploaded to canvas for grading. Course objectives are listed in italics.

## Logic Model

*To specify a program for evaluation and its theory of change.* This written assignment requires the articulation of a program's theory of change using a one-page logic model format. The logic model will include (1) a description of program participants and system conditions that led to the need for the program, (2) major program components, (3) detailed activities, and (4) expected program participant outcomes. Include Reference/Resources (i.e. published references, theorists, research studies, program handbooks, and/or interviews with program staff) used in the development of the logic model.

*Alternate Assignment for Logic Model:* Students who have mastered logic modeling can choose to complete this alternate assignment. Students will develop 10 slides to reflect a program’s theory of change, output metrics, outcome metrics, and impacts.

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### Data Visualization Slides

To understand strategies that promote involvement of practice/policy communities in disseminating the results of evaluation activities in order to foster changes in programs/policies. Students will work individually to prepare graphic results grounded in data visualization principles. Students will facilitate a data interpretation session of results with classmates and with the community client (as feasible).

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### Group Project: Evaluation Report

Over the course, students will work in small groups to plan and implement a short-term community-based evaluation project. The projects will be identified by the instructor. Students will meet with the client, engage in evaluation planning, and implement an evaluation plan (including analysis of data). Using data visualization principles, students will generate a slide deck of results (at least 15 slides) to present to the client at the end of the term. The students will facilitate a data interpretation session of preliminary results with classmates on one of the last two class sessions. All members of the group are expected to participate in the project and the presentation.

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### Grading

Final grades are based on 100 percentage points. Letter grades are assigned to point totals according to the following schedule:

100	A+	88-90	B+	78-80	C+	68-70	D+
94-99	A	84-87	B	74-77	C	64-67	D
91-93	A-	81-83	B-	71-73	C-	<64	E

A brief note about grading: I do not think it serves anyone well for every student in a course to earn an “A” grade, though I am familiar with this practice. Your grade will be a reflection of both your effort and the quality of your engagement and assignments.

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### Course Engagement

I expect you to be engaged in all in-class activities, including contributing comments and questions in class discussions. Some people naturally speak up in class more than others. However, your engagement score is not predicated on the number of times you speak in class; rather I will focus on your participation in activities and whether it is obvious that you are engaged in the class. Class attendance in synchronous sessions is imperative for both your own learning and the learning of your peers, and certainly for my learning. If you cannot get to a synchronous session, I expect you to watch the recording. I expect students to engage with the material, including readings, videos, etc. There will be a series of ungraded quizzes, discussion prompts, and in class group work to help you take in the content; honest attempts at the all of these will be factored in to the engagement grade. There are analytics on Canvas that show me whether and how you have engaged with the content.

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### Late Assignments

Assignments are due at or before the dates/times listed on the syllabus and on Canvas.

Please submit all work on time. Except where indicated, late assignments will be penalized 1/3 of a letter grade for the first day past the due date and time, and a full letter grade for each additional day thereafter. I am not inclined to waive this policy, though I do understand there may be exceptional circumstances.

### Grade Dispute Process

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If you believe you have been graded unfairly on an assignment, I ask that you please wait 24 hours before contacting me. In general, I do accept challenges to grades. However, challenges must be in writing (not verbal); must be specific, and must be based on substantive arguments (or mathematical errors) as opposed to nebulous references to “fairness.” I reserve the right to re-read, and re-grade, the work in its entirety in the case of a challenge. The grade may be adjusted upwards or downwards.

### Additional Course Information and Resources

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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