



Course title:	Program Evaluation and Applied Research
Course #/term:	SW 678-009 Winter 2023
Time and place:	WEDNESDAY 9am - Noon, On Campus
Credit hours:	3
Instructor:	Sue Ann Savas, MSW
Pronouns:	She/her/hers
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Office Hours:	Tuesdays Noon-1pm and by appointment in person or zoom

1. Course Statement

a. Course Description

This course will provide content on the logic of inquiry and the necessity for an empirical approach to social work practice. The process of formulating appropriate research questions, research design, sampling, methods of data collection, procedures to assess and improve the validity and reliability of data and measures, and the ethics of scientific inquiry will be addressed. As consumers of research, students will learn to locate, assess and critique research studies so as to draw appropriate inference, particularly as it affects diverse populations. In addition, this course will provide students with an introduction to evaluation practice as a method of assessing social work practice, strengthening clients, communities, and service systems. Students will have an opportunity to plan an evaluation project, collect, analyze, report and interpret results. This course will help students understand social work practice through the critical examination of methods and approaches associated with decision-making, critical thinking, and ethical judgment.

b. Objectives

1. Examine how program evaluation and research inquiry is used by social workers to advance practice, policy, and service delivery effectiveness (Essential 25, 44; EPAS 1, 4, 5, 9).
2. Discover how to use evaluation and research to support anti-racist practices and social justice (Essential 44, 45; EPAS 1, 2, 3, 5).
3. Create a logic model to describe a program's operational processes and outcomes (Essential 21; EPAS 7, 8).
4. Design an outcome evaluation plan of a social work practice, program or intervention,

including the selection of standard scales and/or culturally responsive outcome collection methods (Essential 27, 44; EPAS 1, 4, 5, 8).

5. Describe ethical responsibilities pertaining to social work evaluation and research including human subject protection, informed consent, bias, and cultural awareness (Essential 44; EPAS 1, 5).

6. Develop strategies to manage, analyze, and report data results to inform practice improvements at multiple levels (Essential 7, 23, 24, 27; EPAS 4, 7, 8, 9).

7. Formulate strategies for involving stakeholders in translating and disseminating data results using multiple formats (Essential 23, 25, 27, 44; EPAS 1, 4, 5, 8, 9).

c. Design

Many different methods will be used for acquiring knowledge and skills including: discussion, lectures, projects, exercises, and lab work. This course is designed to increase students' comfort level with research methods and evaluation approaches to increase their appreciation of the relevance of research and evaluation for social work practice.

d. Intensive Focus on Privilege, Oppression, Diversity and Social Justice (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.

2. Class Requirements

a. Textbook & other readings

The textbook can be purchased online or *downloaded as an e-book from the UM Library*. Program Evaluation for Social Workers: Foundations of Evidence-based Programs by Grinnell, R., Gabor, P., and Unrau, Y. (2019). Eighth Edition. New York: Oxford University Press.

All other readings (articles and other guides), online videos, webinars, and podcasts are posted to Canvas in the relevant weekly module. The modules are organized in the order of the class sessions and will be open one week before class. In order to fully engage in the course, students are expected to complete all required readings. The additional readings are available as resources, including examples of work products. The information presented in the readings and the online modules will be applied in class through exercises and assignments.

The [Schusterman Foundation Data Playbook](https://www.schusterman.org/playbooks/data/) is a useful online reference. Helpful if you need another perspective on the same content and processes.

<https://www.schusterman.org/playbooks/data/>

b. Class Schedule

An overview of each class session is presented next including module #, date, topics, readings, and assignment due dates. To support student learning and interests, additional on-line videos and podcasts will be posted on pages within modules one week prior to the class session.

Module and Date	Topics	To be completed BEFORE each class (all available via Canvas, e-textbook available via UMICH Library)
Module 1. Jan 4	Introduction to the course, community building,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yarbrough, D. B., Shulha, L. M., Hopson, R. K., & Caruthers, F. A. (2011). The program evaluation standards: A guide for evaluators and evaluation users (3rd Ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. • Resource: Schusterman Foundation Data Playbook • Resource: Glossary of Evaluation Terms, USAID
Module 2. Jan 11	Logic Model Workshop Part 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Textbook Chapter 1, Introduction • Textbook Chapter 7, Designing a Program • W. K. Kellogg Foundation Logic Model Development Guide • Review Logic Model examples
Module 3. Jan 18	Logic Model Workshop Part 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Textbook Chapter 8, Theory of Change and Program Logic Models • Textbook Chapter 15, Measuring Program Outcomes • <u>PODCAST</u>: Evaluation of Youth Mentoring Program
Module 4. Jan 25	Evaluation approaches, types, steps, key questions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Textbook Chapter 2, Approaches and Types of Evaluations • Textbook Chapter 3, The Evaluation Process • <u>VIDEO</u>: Interview with Prof Shawna Lee and professional evaluator (45 minutes) • Holley, M., Recchia, C., and Bickstette, V. (2016). Measuring What Matters: Five Grant Performance Traps and How to Avoid Them. <i>Stanford Social Innovation Review</i>.
Module 5. Feb 1	Qualitative data collection: Focus Groups, Most Significant Change Stories of Impact, Brinkerhoff Success Case Method	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>VIDEO</u>: Culturally Responsive Focus Groups, NVIVO Workshop, one hour • Dean, D.L. (2015) How to Use Focus Groups, J.S. Wholey, H.P. Hatry, & K.E. Newcomer (Eds), <u>Handbook of Practical Program Evaluation</u> (Fourth Edition), San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, p338-350. • Halaweh, H., Dahlin-Ivanoff, S., Svantesson, U., Willen C., (2018), Perspectives of Older Adults on Aging Well: A Focus Group Study, <i>Journal of Aging Research</i>. • <u>VIDEO</u>: Most Significant Change, Beyond Numbers, UNICEF (12 minutes) • Resource: Davies, R. and Dart, J., (2005) <i>Most Significant Change Technique: A Guide to its Use</i>. SEMINAL DOCUMENT
Module 6. Feb 8	Qualitative data analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Taylor-Powell, E. and Renner, M. Analyzing Qualitative Data, <u>University of Wisconsin Extension Cooperative</u>, 2003. SEMINAL DOCUMENT • Perrin, B. (2014) Think Positively! And Make a Difference Through Evaluation, <i>Canadian Journal of Program Evaluation</i>, 29.2 (Fall).

Module and Date	Topics	To be completed BEFORE each class (all available via Canvas, e-textbook available via UMICH Library)
Module 7 Feb 15	Quantitative data collection: Standard scales and surveys	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>PODCAST</u>: Can a test really tell who is a psychopath? National Public Radio • Textbook Chapter 17, Collecting Data and Selecting a Sample • Umich Library Guides, Standardized Instrument Search at http://guides.lib.umich.edu/tests •
Module 8. Feb 22	Quantitative data analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>VIDEO</u>: Excel Job Test (24 minutes), Anne Emory • Textbook Chapter 19, Using Data Information Systems • Romans, A., Stanciel, C., and Harley, T. Measuring is an act of power: A call for pro-black measurement and evaluation, <i>Non-profit Quarterly</i>, (2022). • W.K. Kellogg Evaluation Handbook at http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/BJA/evaluation/links/WK-Kellogg-Foundation.pdf • Dabbling in the Data: A Hands-on-Guide to Participatory Data Analysis, (2015) • Resource: Rockinson-Szapkiw, A. (2013). Statistics Guide
March 1	Spring Break	
Module 9. March 8	Ethics and Cultural Responsiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>PODCAST</u>: The Power of Community-led Data Gathering with the Center for Native American Youth • Textbook Chapter 5, Evaluation Ethics • Textbook Chapter 6, Cultural Competent Evaluator • American Evaluation Association Public Statement on Cultural Competence in Evaluation, (2011) • Waapalaneexkweew (Bowman, N., Mohican/Lunaape), & Dodge-Francis, C. (2018). Culturally responsive indigenous evaluation and tribal governments: Understanding the relationship. In F. Cram, K. A. Tibbetts, & J. LaFrance (Eds.), <i>Indigenous Evaluation. New Directions for Evaluation</i>, 159, 17–31 • Lemos, D. and Garcia, D. Promoting Culturally Responsive and Equitable Evaluation with Latinx Immigrants. (2020). <i>New Directions for Evaluation</i>. https://onlinelibrary-wiley-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/abs/10.1002/ev.20410
Module 10. March 15	Data visualization, data interpretation and reporting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>VIDEO</u>: Dr. Stephanie Evergreen Data Visualization lecture (1 hour) • Textbook Chapter 20, Making Decisions • Textbook Chapter 21, Effective Communication and Reporting • Data Visualization Checklist and Chart Chooser, Evergreen • Gugelev, A. and Stern, A. (2015) What is your endgame? <i>Stanford Social Innovation Review</i>. • Turning Data into Action (2017) www.livestories.com • Resource: Kauffman Foundation Evaluation Reporting Guide
Module 11. March 22	Using evaluation and research to support anti-racist practices and social justice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>VIDEO</u>: AEA Anti-racism Evaluation Panel • Kellogg Foundation <u>Webinar</u>: Doing Evaluation in Service of Racial Equity Community Engagement session #2, (2022) • Symonette, H., Miller, R. L., & Barela, E. (2020). Power, privilege, and competence: Using the 2018 AEA Evaluator Competencies to shape socially just evaluation practice. In J. A. King (Ed.), <i>The American Evaluation Association's Program Evaluator Competencies. New Directions for Evaluation</i>, 2020, 117–132. • Leah C. Neubauer, Dominica McBride, Andrea D. Guajardo, Wanda D. Casillas, and Melvin E. Hall (2020). Examining Issues Facing Communities of Color Today: The Role of Evaluation to Incite Change. <i>New Directions for Evaluation</i>. https://onlinelibrary-wiley-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/abs/10.1002/ev.20406

Module and Date	Topics	To be completed BEFORE each class (all available via Canvas, e-textbook available via UMICH Library)
Module 12. March 29	Data Project Group Work Session	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Four Year Results from the National YouthBuild Evaluation, MDRC, Miller, C., Cummings, D., Millenky, M. and Weigand, A. (2018)
Module 13. April 5	Outcome evaluation planning workshop, group presentations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Textbook Chapter 13, Outcome Evaluations 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. Sanders, M., Galindo, C. , Vega-Marquis, L, and Milloy, C., (2017) Marguerite Casey Foundation: Reflecting on 15 Years of Philanthropic Leadership Through a Summative Evaluation, <i>The Foundation Review</i>, Vol9, Issue 2, Article 7.
Module 14. April 12	Group presentations, course reflection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student self-efficacy assessment

c. Assignments

Assignment	Due date, submit to canvas by 5pm	Percent of overall
Logic Model	January 25 (draft), Feb 1 (final)	20%
Standard Outcome Scale Review	February 22	15%
Data Visualization Slides	March 29	15%
Data Group Project	April 5 or April 12	25%
Outcome Evaluation Plan	April 17, finals week	25%

Logic Model.

Students will use this assignment to demonstrate their completion of course objective #3. *Create a logic model to describe a program's operational processes and outcomes (Essential 21; EPAS 7, 8).*

This individual written assignment requires the articulation of a program or policy's operation using a logic model (one page landscape format). Students will choose the program for this assignment. Some students select a program/policy they know well, others select a program/policy they want to learn more about. 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 planned activities and expected outputs, and (4) expected program participant outcomes. Students will include an annotated bibliography (1-2 paragraphs

each) of three research studies that support the intervention. Students will include a written list of Reference/Resource (i.e. published references, theorists, research studies, program handbooks, and/or interviews with program staff) used in the development of the logic model. Students have an opportunity to submit a draft for review by the instructor. The grading rubric is available on canvas. *The instructor will provide the template.*

Standard Outcome Scale Review.

Students will use this assignment to demonstrate their completion of course objective # 4. *Design an outcome evaluation plan of a social work practice, program or intervention, including the selection of standard scales and/or culturally responsive outcome collection methods (Essential 27, 44; EPAS 1, 4, 5, 8).*

Students will locate a standard scale (from the research literature or a standard scale search engine) used to measure outcome attainment with the program and population they described in the logic model assignment. Criteria will include, but not be limited to these: purpose of the tool, authors, date of development, relevant theories or constructs, outcome domain, result calculations, training needed to administer the standard scale, languages, cultural relevance, cost, norming group, reliability test results, and validity test results. *A review form will be provided by the instructor. References are required.*

Data Visualization Slides.

Students will use this assignment to demonstrate their attainment of course objective #6. *Develop strategies to manage, analyze, and report data results to inform practice improvements at multiple levels (Essential 7, 23, 24, 27; EPAS 4, 7, 8, 9) AND course objective #7. Formulate strategies for involving stakeholders in translating and disseminating data results using multiple formats (Essential 23, 25, 27, 44; EPAS 1, 4, 5, 8, 9).*

Individually, students will design three (3) different charts to communicate evaluation results (for example: a horizontal bar chart, a pie chart, or an icon array). The assignment will assess the student's understanding of data visualization principles including selecting the right chart for the data, development of a result takeaway title, and chart formats to improve accurate interpretation of the data.

Group Data Project.

Students will use this assignment to demonstrate their completion of course objective #1. *Examine how program evaluation and research inquiry is used by social workers to advance*

practice, policy, and service delivery effectiveness (Essential 25, 44; EPAS 1, 4, 5, 9) AND course objective #2. Discover how to use evaluation and research to support anti-racist practices and social justice (Essential 44, 45; EPAS 1, 2, 3, 5).

Over the course, students will work in small groups to plan the analysis and reporting portion of an evaluation or applied research project. The projects will be identified by students (usually field placement data projects) or by the instructor as needed. Given the limitations of the course schedule, student will identify previously collected data. Data analysis (quantitative, qualitative, or both) is a requirement of the assignment. Using data visualization principles, students will generate a slide deck of results (10-15 slides) to present to the class (and the community partner). The students will receive immediate written feedback from the instructor after their presentation; they will have an opportunity to revise their slides and submit the final version during exam week. All members of the group are expected to participate fully in the project and the presentation. Each group member will add their name to each slide they developed in the note section of the slide deck.

Outcome Evaluation Plan (standard core assignment).

Students will use this assignment to demonstrate their completion of course objective # 4. *Design an outcome evaluation plan of a social work practice, program or intervention, including the selection of standard scales and/or culturally responsive outcome collection methods (Essential 27, 44; EPAS 1, 4, 5, 8) AND course objective # 5. Describe ethical responsibilities pertaining to social work evaluation and research including human subject protection, informed consent, bias, and cultural awareness (Essential 44; EPAS 1, 5).*

Students will develop an outcome evaluation plan for the program selected for the logic model assignment. The standard core assignment will be used to demonstrate CSWE competencies: (1) Social workers will select and use appropriate methods for evaluation of outcomes; (2) Social workers will apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks in the evaluation of outcomes; (3) Social workers will critically analyze, monitor, and evaluate intervention and program processes and outcomes. Each student will complete the Outcome Evaluation Plan template (2-3 pages) provided by the instructor. Students will develop an outcome evaluation plan for the program they used for the logic model assignment. Components of the outcome evaluation plan will include the (1) purpose of the evaluation and key outcome questions; (2) outcome design selected, explanation of appropriateness, reasons why other more rigorous designs were not feasible, and limitations of the design; (3) data collection plan, including use of standard scale or rationale for why this is not feasible or culturally relevant, collection schedule, procedures, human subject protections, and best practices to minimize conflict or bias; (4) data analysis plan for qualitative and/or quantitative data; and (5) plan for reporting and utilizing the results to improve practices. *The instructor will provide the template.*

d. Course engagement, attendance, class participation

Class attendance is imperative for both your own learning and the learning of your peers, and certainly for my learning. I expect students to attend class and small group sessions. Excessive absences (more than 2) will result in a lower course grade. If personal or professional circumstances require your absence from more than one class, please contact me as soon as possible. Note that, even if you are absent from a class, you are still responsible for the content and the required assignments due that day. Please review the [Policy on Class Attendance](#) found in the MSW Student Guide. Course engagement is more than attending the sessions. Engagement includes asking and answering questions in class. Course engagement includes coming to class prepared (doing the readings, watching the videos, listening to the podcasts, completing the exercises). Engagement includes contributing fully to your group evaluation project.

e. Grading

Final grades are based on 100 percentage points. Letter grades are assigned to point totals according to the point to grade chart below. Assignments are due on or before the dates listed on the syllabus and on Canvas. Please submit all work on time. Note: **assignments are due by 5pm**. Additional MSW policies are available in the Student Guide: [Grades in Academic Courses](#) and in [Field Instruction](#), [Student Grievance procedures](#), [policy for grading in special circumstances](#).

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

Logic Model	20 points
Standard Outcome Scale Review	15 points
Data Visualization Slides	15 points
Group Data Project, Slide Deck and Presentation	25 points
Outcome Evaluation Plan	25 points
Total	100 points

f. Class Recording and Course Materials

Audio and video recording of in-class lectures and discussions is prohibited without the advance written permission of the instructor. Students with an approved accommodation from the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities permitting the recording of class meetings must present documentation to the instructor in advance of any recording. The instructor reserves the right to disallow recording for a portion of any class time where privacy is a special concern. If the instructor chooses to record a class, they will decide which classes, if any, are recorded, what portion of each class is recorded, and whether a recording is made available on the course

management website. On days when classes are recorded, students will be notified a recording is occurring. Class recordings and course materials may not be reproduced, sold, published or distributed to others, in whole or in part, without the written consent of the instructor.] Additional information on class recordings can be found the [Recording and Privacy Concerns FAQ](#)

g. COVID-19 Statement

For the safety of all students, faculty, and staff on campus, it is important for each of us to be mindful of safety measures that have been put in place for our protection. Your participation in this course is conditional upon your adherence to all safety measures mandated by the state of Michigan and the University, including compliance with the [University COVID-19 Vaccination Policy](#) and [mask policy](#). Other applicable and additional safety measures may be described in the [Campus Maize & Blueprint](#). Your ability to participate in this course may be impacted by failure to comply with campus safety measures. Individuals seeking to request an accommodation related to the face covering requirement under the Americans with Disabilities Act should contact the [Office for Institutional Equity](#) and those seeking an exemption related to the vaccination requirement should submit an exemption request through [WolverineAccess](#). I also encourage you to review the [Statement of Student Rights and Responsibilities](#) and the [COVID-related Addendum to the Statement of Student Rights and Responsibilities](#).

h. Health Related Class Absences

Please evaluate your own health status regularly and refrain from attending class and coming to campus if you are ill. You are encouraged to seek appropriate medical attention for treatment. School of Social Work students who miss class due to illness of any kind will be given opportunities to access course materials online or provided with alternative learning opportunities. Please notify me by email about your absence as soon as practical, so that I can make accommodations. Please note that documentation (a Doctor's note) for medical excuses is *not* required.

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*
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Instructor Teaching Philosophy. Adapted from Rosenshine, B. *Research-based Strategies that All Teachers Should Know*, American Educator (Spring 2012).

I will begin each session with a review of what was covered the previous lecture. Students will be asked to provide the review of key concepts and “take-aways.” I will present material in small steps and provide class time for students to practice after each step. I will give clear instructions. I will provide models, templates and numerous examples of problem-solving, including rehearsal time. I will think aloud as I demonstrate. I will provide scaffolds for difficult tasks and notify students of possible errors. I will guide student practice through additional explanations, live review of drafts, and small group consultations. I will monitor students for understanding by asking specific questions and checking student responses. I will reteach material when necessary. I will teach material needed by students even when the students were expected to have mastered the material prior to the course. I will note student successes and give students ample opportunity to practice independently. I will provide feedback as students begin to practice independently. I use transparent and inclusive teaching approaches.

I use an engaged active learning approach and partner with the community to address real challenges. In addition to the course objectives and the CSWE competencies, we work to develop the following University of Michigan engaged learning student outcomes: (1) self-agency and innovation, (2) collaboration, communication, and teamwork, (3) social/civic responsibility and ethical reasoning, (4) intercultural engagement, (5) creativity.