1. **Course 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.

2. **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 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.

3. **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.

4. Relationship of the Course to Four Curricular Themes

- Multiculturalism and Diversity: Students will develop the capacity to identify ways in which gender, race, ethnicity, social class, age, and other forms of social stratification and disenfranchisement influence and are impacted by various methods of program evaluation.
- Social Justice and Social Change: 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 to 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.
- Promotion, Prevention, Treatment, and 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.
- 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, which emerge. 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.

5. Course Design

The instructor will select required and recommended readings. In addition, the instructor will include a range of pedagogical methods, such as participatory discussions, written assignments, and experiential exercises related to course materials. Guest speakers may be invited to address special topics. The extent of computer use and use of statistical packages throughout this course will be determined by the instructor.

6. Relationship of the Course to Social Work 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 used to review issues commonly confronted in program/policy evaluation.
7. Assignments and Grading Criteria
Authentic assessment will be used to determine the attainment of course objectives. Students will develop a portfolio throughout the term to showcase their application of evaluation knowledge and skills. Key portfolio components will be confirmed and finalized with each student. Critical elements will include, but will not be limited to: evaluation project work plan and budget, qualitative collection tool, quantitative collection tool, review of standardized tool, and evaluation report. A grading rubric will be developed to determine course letter grades.

Part I Evaluation Portfolio (40 points) due mid-term
Part II Evaluation Portfolio (40 points) due end of term
Class and field-based participation (20 points)

Grades are earned by successfully demonstrating understanding and application of the evaluation concepts, attending and participating in class. A 100-point system is used. At the end of the term, the points earned will be translated into letter grades according to the following formula:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A+</td>
<td>97-100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>94-96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>91-93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>87-90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>84-86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>81-83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>77-80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>74-76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>70-73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>&lt;69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(no credit)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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. Students with specialized learning needs are requested to make an appointment with the instructor to discuss the necessary arrangements. Please review the Student Guide section on Ethical Conduct in the University Environment (pp. 50-52). This section addresses plagiarism, harassment and discrimination policies. Students are expected to complete assignments on their own.

8. Required Text

9. Course Outline
Wholey Text is indicated with “T.” The text is on reserve at the SSW library or is available for purchase at Ulrich’s. Required articles or other evaluation samples are indicated with an “A” and are available electronically or distributed in class as handouts.

**Lecture 1, January 5**
Scope of the course, field-based opportunities, student experiences, student expectations, portfolio requirements, purposes/scope of evaluation.

**Lecture 2, January 12**
From 1st Edition Wholey Text:
T Chapter 1: Meeting the Need for Practical Evaluation Approaches
T Chapter 2: Assessing the Feasibility and Likely Usefulness of Evaluation
T Chapter 22: Evaluators as Change Agents
Lecture 3, January 19
All of the following assigned text readings are from the 2nd Edition Wholey Text (2004):
  T Chapter 3: Implementation Evaluation
  T Chapter 13: Collecting Data in the Field
  T Chapter 19: Pitfalls of Evaluation

Lecture 4, January 26
  T Chapter 4: Performance Monitoring
  T Chapter 14: Using Agency Records
  T Chapter 20: Managing Evaluation Projects

Lecture 5, FIELD SITE VISIT #1, February 2

Lecture 6, February 9
  T Chapter 8: Trained Observer Ratings
  T Chapter 9: Using Surveys
  T Chapter 23: The Use of Evaluation by Nonprofit Organizations

Lecture 7, FIELD SITE VISIT #2, February 16

Lecture 8, February 23  
  T Chapter 10: Using Expert Judgment
  T Chapter 12: Using Focus Groups
  T Chapter 15: Qualitative Data Analysis

Mid-course feedback survey

NO CLASS ON MARCH 2nd DUE TO WINTER BREAK

Lecture 9, March 9  
  T Chapter 5: Quasi-Experimentation
  T Chapter 6: Using Randomized Experiments

PART I EVALUATION PORTFOLIO DUE

Lecture 10, FIELD SITE VISIT #3, March 16

Lecture 11, March 23
  T Chapter 16: Using Statistics in Evaluation
  T Chapter 18: Cost-Effectiveness and Cost-Benefit Analysis

Lecture 12, FIELD SITE VISIT #4, March 30
Lecture 13, April 6
T Chapter 21: Writing for Impact
T Chapter 24: Other Issues and Trends in Evaluation

Lecture 14, April 13
FINAL DRAFT PORTFOLIO DUE (Parts I and II)

Other resources to be distributed and assigned when relevant to student learning:

Community Tool Box: A Framework for Program Evaluation (University of Kansas).

HRSA Healthy Start Grant Application: Evaluation Section


NIH Certificate for Human Subjects.


SAMHSA website. Pathways courses. Introduction to Evaluation.