683: Evaluation in Social Work  
Winter 2002

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SWK 683, Section 002</th>
<th>Classroom: 3003 SEB</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Monday: 2:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Instructor: Joan M. Abbey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phone: (517)-223-4055</td>
<td>Fax: (517)-223-4049</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office Location: 3833 SSWB</td>
<td>Office Hours: By Appointment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E-mail address:</td>
<td><a href="mailto:jabbey@umich.edu">jabbey@umich.edu</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Course Description**

This course will cover the theory and practice of evaluation as a method of assessing social work, practice and strengthening clients, communities and the social programs, and the systems that serve them. It will also address 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 theoretical foundations of the evaluation of social work practice with particular attention to populations at risk, including people of color, women and gay and lesbian groups. 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 and their fit with 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 the social work practice.
2. Context of a specific evaluation.
3. Apply evaluation methods that are appropriate to the evaluation context, such as problem
4. Definition, and development of appropriate methodology and analysis plans.
5. Plan an evaluation of social work practice.
6. Critically evaluate using the models and tools covered in class existing evaluation documents for their consistency with the values reflected in the curricular themes.
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. Students will carry out appropriate evaluation tasks as assigned. Guest speakers may be invited to address special topics.

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 evaluation process 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.

- **Social Justice and Social Change**: Students will develop the capacity to analyze the impact and efficiency of services and policies as they relate to social change and social justice. They will learn to develop services and programs that could plausibly serve these functions. Participatory, collaborative, change-oriented evaluation processes 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 evaluation participants can mobilize to shift imbalances of power and resources.

- **Promotion and Prevention**: Students will develop the capacity to develop and evaluate prevention and promotion programs designed to reduce risk of onset of problems and promote healthy development.

- **Social Science**: Students will strengthen their capacity to use social science literature, both research-based and theoretical, to develop appropriate interventions and evaluations that are feasible, relevant and scientifically sound.

Relationship of the Course to Social Work Ethics and Values

Ethical standards of social work practice (the NASW Code of Ethics) and evaluation practice will be used to review ethical issues commonly confronted in the evaluation.

Texts


Course pack: Available at Dollar Bill Copying, 611 Church Street.
A course pack will be held on reserve in the Social Work Library.

Electronic Course Resources

The following web sites are provided as resources for this course enabling students to do many of the required readings, as well as providing useful information to aid students in carrying out the class assignments. In addition to the web sites listed
below the students will be given a four-page listing of research related Internet sites the first day of class.

http://www.mapnp.org
http://www.gse.harvard.edu/hrfp
http://www.gao.gov
http://www.jrsa.org/jjec/
http://www.nyu.edu/cgi-bin/cgiwrap/jep7/demomenu.cgi?cid=502
http://www.lib.umich.edu/socwork/testresources.html
http://www.lib.umich.edu/socwork/tests.html
http://www.ori.hhs.gov
http://www.cdc.gov/eval/standard.htm


Housekeeping
- Please turn off all pagers and cell phones during class time or set them on vibrate only as these electronic devices are disruptive to the educational process.

- Please consult me if you have any special needs that we need to accommodate to maximize your learning experience.

Course Requirements
1. Participation. Students are expected to fully participate in the learning process and to assist in the development of a comfortable, stimulating classroom environment. Attendance at all classes is required and students who miss a session are responsible for securing lecture notes from their peers, and handouts from the instructor. Active participation is essential to the success of this course (individually for you and collectively for all the students). This includes coming on time and being prepared having read the required readings for each session, exercising good listening skills, contributing analytical comments, asking questions, participating in classroom activities, and consulting with the professor outside of class as needed. Class participation will be evaluated based on quality as well as quantity. Passive or aggressive, monopolizing or whiny participation does not carry the weight of constructive participation.

2. Required Readings. All required readings are to be completed prior to the day to which they are assigned. Required readings may be found in the course text, course pack, and hand-out materials

3. Coursework Completion. The assignments require students to conduct additional research that builds upon the information contained in both the readings and lectures. Students will be responsible for completing all written assignments by the due date and in accordance with the guidelines that follow.

4. Writing Policy. Good writing is an important skill for professional social workers. Students are encouraged to consult the section on writing in your Student Guide to the Masters in Social Work Degree Program, called “Writing Term Papers…” (p. 54). You may also find it instructive to read The Publication Manual of the American
Psychological Association (4th Edition). Students are encouraged to make use of the LSA writing workshop, which provides assistance in writing specific assignments. To take advantage of this free program call (734) 764-0429. The writing workshop is available at 1139 Angell Hall, Room 1003. Student papers will be judged on clarity of writing, clear organization of ideas (headings and subheadings help), ability to incorporate class readings and lectures in the assignment, demonstration of additional research, brevity and basic grammar. All written assignments submitted by students should be double spaced in no less than 12-point font. Please page number and proofread your papers. Margins for written assignments should be no less than 1 inch all around. Failure to follow these guidelines will cost students points off their grade for the assignment. Students are strongly encouraged to make and keep a copy of their written assignments as either the instructor or the student may occasionally lose these items.

5. Writing Criteria. Written assignments will be evaluated both for content and clarity of presentation using a checklist specific to each assignment, but covering the following criteria.

- **Organization and Clarity:** Is the paper in the requested format? Does the paper follow the syllabus instructions in relationship to font size, etc.? Is the paper well written and organized in a logical manner? Are there appropriate transitions between paragraphs and sections? Are headings and subheadings used to improve organization? Are the sentence structure, syntax and grammar of appropriate quality for a graduate student? Are the issues addressed in such a way that someone unfamiliar with the topic can understand them?

- **Completeness and Thoroughness:** How fully have the issues been addressed? Has the student sufficiently researched the issue using library resources, interviews and other means in order to gain differing perspectives and full knowledge of the issue? Does the paper leave the reader with the impression that major questions are answered? Is the quality of issue/problem analysis at graduate level? Has the paper been carefully proofread?

- **Referencing:** Are there a sufficient number of references? Has the theoretical and empirical literature on the subject been incorporated into the paper? Are references well integrated in the text of the paper? Are opinions/ideas supported by cited sources? Has referencing been done appropriately?

- **Originality and Creativity:** Has the student used his or her analytical skills in a way that suggest more than a restatement of what others have said about the issue? Has the student compared, contrasted and integrated different viewpoints and material on the subject in a way that shows s/he has a thorough understanding of the issue? Has the student suggested points that have not been addressed by others?

**Grading Criteria**

It is best not to assume that you will receive an “A” in this course, due to the increased demands of graduate level studies. Most of you were “A” students as undergraduates, but as graduate students with the increased challenges of the work at this level it is natural that there will be some alterations in your grade averages. Both content and format will be considered in assigning grades. Though content is more heavily weighted in grade assignment, format, and presentation are also important. Failure to
follow APA guidelines for referencing and for headings will result in a lower grade. I use a checklist for each assignment to grade your papers and compare each paper to that checklist. You will receive a copy of each assignments checklist well in advance of that assignments due date. However, your work will also be evaluated as it compares to that of your classmates for each assignment. If, after you read my feedback, you have questions or concerns about the grade, please put these concerns in writing to me. I will re-read a paper, but do not expect a grade change unless you can demonstrate that something was included that I thought was missing, or there was a math error. In the event that a student chooses to re-write the paper, I will assign the mean grade for the two papers. All papers are due by the end of the class period on the due date. Papers are not accepted via e-mail as the attachment may contain a worm or virus. Late papers automatically lose five (5) points.

Grades of A are reserved for student’s meeting all the above course requirements and whose work not only demonstrates excellent mastery of content, but undertakes complex or new issues and tasks, applies critical thinking skills to the assignments and in-class activities, and demonstrates creativity in their approach to the assignments. Grades of B are given to students whose work is judged to be very good and demonstrates a more than competent understanding of the material, who undertakes complex or new issues and tasks, applies critical thinking skills to the assignments and in-class activities, and demonstrates creativity in their approach to the assignments. A grade of C is given to student’s whose work is less than adequate and reflects only moderate grasp of content, fails to meet minimum standards for assignments and does not apply critical thinking skills. Your final grade in the class will be calculated by adding up your scores on the individual assignments. Final grade determinations are in accordance with the following apportioning:

97-100 = A+
93-96 = A
92-90 = A-
87-89 = B+
83-86 = B
82-80 = B-
77-79 = C+
76-73 = C
72-70 = C-

Assignments

Assignments are designed to build upon each other. Culminating in a final evaluation design proposal and its presentation. Students are to work with their practicum field instructor to select a program or project within the agency for evaluation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Percent of Grade</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attendance &amp; Participation</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>On-going</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Literature Review</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>February 4, 2002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program Specification Narrative &amp; Logic Model</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>March 4, 2002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assignment</td>
<td>Percent of Grade</td>
<td>Due Date</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation Plans</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>April 8, 2002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation Plan Presentations</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>April 8 &amp; 15, 2002</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Attendance & Participation
Students must attend the entire session every week. Weekly attendance is critical as the course content becomes progressively more complex as the course moves forward. Students are expected to complete the assigned readings in preparation for class and to participate in classroom discussions and other activities.

Literature Review Summary
Working with the field instructor at the student’s practicum site, select a program or project within the agency for evaluating. Students are to conduct a literature review of evaluations and other research relevant to their selected program or project. From this literature review students will gain insights into their program’s theory of change, how others have conceptualized research questions, evaluation designs and potential instruments or measures for evaluations of similar programs. Student’s should prepare a three (3) to five (5) page summary of the articles reviewed, which answers the eleven (11) questions discussed in the Literature Review Guidelines discussed in class on January 14. Students are to attach to the narrative a table depicting the literature elements that were reviewed. A sample literature review table will be provided.

Program Specification Narrative & Logic Model
This assignment requires that students engage in program specification activities. Students must design a logic model for the program or project detailing the program/project assumptions, inputs, activities and anticipated outcomes. A four (4) page maximum narrative should accompany the logic model. The page limitation does not include the narrative’s reference page. The narrative should describe each component of the logic model and outline the theoretical and empirical support for the program/project assumptions, activities and outcomes. The logic model narrative should address the system or client problem the program addresses, a description of the program components, the program’s goals and objectives, major program processes and/or activities, and an enumeration of the short and long-term outcomes and the underlying rationale for why these outcomes are expected to occur.

Evaluation Plan Proposal
This last assignment builds upon the prior two (2) assignments where you will have specified the program components, theory of change, support for the theory of change from the literature and logic model for the program/project your field instructor and you have selected. For this final assignment the student is to incorporate these assignments into the development of a proposed evaluation design and sampling plan for evaluating the selected agency program/project. The evaluation proposal must specifically detail what you plan to do, (what you want to know and why), what will be done (the measures, data sources, data collection methodology and data analysis plan), the scope and limitations of your evaluation plan, and potential barriers to implementing the evaluation plan. The proposal should also outline a work plan and timetable for completing the evaluation, and the plan for reporting and utilizing the evaluation results. The student’s plans should reflect the material from the readings and in class activities.
The evaluation plan proposal should not exceed ten (10) pages exclusive of the logic model and bibliography, which should be attached to the proposal.

**Evaluation Project Presentation**

Students will prepare and carryout a brief oral presentation of their evaluation project plan to their peers in class. Students should be prepared to answer questions from their peers and the instructor critiquing any and all aspects of the project plan. Likewise students who are not presenting should come prepared to analyze the merits of the proposals their peers will be presenting. The instructor will assign presentation dates.

**Course Schedule**

**Session I. January 7, 2002**

**Introduction to the Course and Evaluation**

Readings: Rossi, Freeman & Lipsey. Chapter 1.

Handouts: Supplemental Materials

**Session II. January 14, 2002**

**Evaluation Planning**

Readings: Rossi, Freeman & Lipsey. Chapter 2 & 3.
[http://www.mapnp.org/library/evaluatn/fnleval.htm#anchor1586742](http://www.mapnp.org/library/evaluatn/fnleval.htm#anchor1586742)


Handouts: Supplemental Materials

**Session III. January 21, 2002**

Martin Luther King Day – No Class Today


**Session IV. January 28, 2002**
Asset and Needs Assessment
Readings: Rossi, Freeman & Lipsey. Chapter 4.
Course pack:
Handouts: Supplemental Materials

Session V. February 4, 2002
Program Specification & Logic Modeling
- Computer Lab
- Literature Review Summary Due
Readings: Rossi, Freeman & Lipsey. Chapter 5.
Course pack:
Handouts: Supplemental Materials

Session VI. February 11, 2002
Measurement Issues
- Computer Lab
- Measurement Electronic Resources
http://www.nyu.edu/cgi-bin/cgiwrap/jep7/demomenu.cgi?cid=502
http://www.lib.umich.edu/socwork/testresources.html
http://www.jrsa.org/jjec/
http://www.lib.umich.edu/socwork/tests.html
Readings:
Course pack:
Handouts: Supplemental Materials

Session VII. February 18, 2002
Program Monitoring and Process Evaluation


Course pack:


Handouts: Supplemental Materials

Session VIII. February 25, 2002

SPRING BREAK - NO CLASS TODAY

Session IX. March 4, 2002

Program Outcomes

- Computer Lab
- Program Specification Narrative & Logic Model Due

Readings: Rossi, Freeman & Lipsey. Chapters 7 & 8.

Course pack:


Handouts: Supplemental Materials

Session X. March 11, 2002

Measuring Client Outcomes Using Single Subject/System Designs

- Computer Lab

Readings:

Rossi, Freeman & Lipsey. Chapters 9 & 10.

Course pack:


Handouts: Supplemental Materials
Session XI. March 18, 2002

Efficiency Outcomes
Readings: Rossi, Freeman & Lipsey. Chapter 11.
Course pack:
Handouts: Supplemental Materials

Session XII. March 25, 2002

Presentation and Utilization of Evaluation Results
Readings: Rossi, Freeman & Lipsey. Chapter 12.
Course pack:
Handouts: Supplemental Materials

Session XIII. April 1, 2002

Evaluation Implementation Issues
Readings:
Course pack:
Handouts: Supplemental Materials
Session XIV.    April 8, 2002
Ethics in Evaluation
  • Evaluation Presentations Start
  • Evaluation Plans Due
Readings:
Course pack:
Handouts: Supplemental Materials

Session XV.    April 15, 2002
Integrated Seminar: Course Overflow Content
  • Finish Evaluation Presentations

a:683w2002.doc