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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 and knowledge 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 context of a specific evaluation.
2. Apply evaluation methods that are appropriate to the evaluation context, such as problem definition, program specification, developing questions, evaluation design, development of appropriate methodology and analysis plans.
3. Plan and critique an evaluation of social work practice by appropriately applying the phases of evaluation process (i.e., assessment, design, measurement, sampling, implementation, monitoring, and analysis) to evaluate services, practices, programs, and relevant populations.
4. Apply the ethical standards of evaluation practice to issues commonly confronted in the evaluation of practice, programs, and services in social work.
5. Describe ways in which to monitor one’s own practice in social work.
6. Identify, assess and address ways in which gender, race, ethnicity, social class, age and other forms of social stratification and disenfranchisement influence evaluation and outcomes.
7. Critically evaluate, using the models and tools covered in class, existing evaluation documents for their consistency with the values reflected in the curricular themes with respect to quality, bias, ethics, and potential applications, as may impact populations at risk, including people of color, women, and gay and lesbian groups.
8. Apply the processes by which evaluation findings in related literature on practices, services, and policy can be used to enhance social justice, social change, promotion, prevention, treatment, and rehabilitation.
9. Gain some experience in public speaking in the area of evaluation

**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 (The Joint Committee on Standards for Educational Evaluation’s Program Evaluation Standards) will be used to review issues commonly confronted in the evaluation of social work practice, programs and services. The ethical themes of autonomy, beneficence, nonmaleficence, fidelity, and justice will be emphasized and discussed. In particular, several topical areas related to evaluation will be covered, including confidentiality and informed consent procedures; protection of evaluation participants, staff, and agencies from unwarranted physical or mental discomfort, distress, harm, danger, or deprivation; and accurate and appropriate reporting and dissemination of results. Emphasis will also be placed on the social workers’ ethical obligation to use scientifically sound practice and to continually evaluate practice and programs.
Course Design: The instructor will select required and recommended readings. In addition this course will use a variety of strategies to promote students understanding of the course materials including, lecture, participatory discussions, small groups work, mock exercises, guest lectures and a variety of assignments (oral, written, presentations and meeting participation)

Course Requirements:

Attendance and Participation: Students are expected to attend and to be prepared to take part in each class session. This includes completing all assigned reading before class, attending class on time, and participating in all class activities. Class Attendance is important for you to keep up with course work. Missing three classes will reduce your final grade; one-half grade (e.g. an A would be reduced to an A-) and each additional absence will reduce your final grade an additional half grade. Excessive absences may result in failure of the course. Coming to or leaving class mid-way is considered an absence. As adult learners, I expect you to make appropriate decisions about attending class, this includes coming to class late and leaving class mid-way. Please notify me as soon as possible if you must miss class and it is your responsibility to obtain any notes, materials, handouts or exercises from the missed session from one of your classmates.

Please be cognizant of the disruptive nature of coming to class late. If you are delayed, please enter the classroom as quietly as possible and wait until break to catch up with what is going on. I will leave handouts by the door of the classroom so you may pick them up when you enter.

There are three required papers and a presentation of your final paper. Each paper and the presentation are integrated and are to be based on a program at the student’s field placement. A brief description of each assignment follows. A more detailed description of each assignment will be handed out in class.

Paper 1: Program Description – due January 29, 2002 (15%)

You will work with your field instructor to select a program within the agency for evaluation. You will write a program description and design a logic model for the program and answer a series of questions about the program. The paper will include a literature review and describe (1) the purpose, goal and objective of the program, (2) who the program serves, (3) how the program is implemented, (4) program-client interactions, and (5) the program theory and rational for the program.

Paper 2: Research Questions, Design and Measurement – due March 19, 2002 (15%)

This paper will discuss the specific questions to be answered in an evaluation of the program. Further, the type of evaluation, research design and measurements that will be used to address these research questions will be described. Support for the choices of the question, design and measurements will be provided through appropriate literature review.

Paper 3 (Final Paper) – Evaluation Research Design – due April 17, 2002 (40%)

You will prepare a complete evaluation research design of the placement program which you have been studying this term. You will build on the two previous assignments (this is your opportunity to use the feedback that you have gotten on them to improve your work.) You will briefly review the program, and provide a justification for doing an evaluation of the program. You will state your revised research questions. You will describe in detail your research
design including sampling methods, concern for human subjects, measurement instruments and other data collection, an analysis plan, reporting of the results and limitations of the study. Finally, you will discuss how the evaluation might be applied to practice, to the program and to policy.

Class presentation – **April 9 or April 17, 2002 (20%)**

You will make a 10-15 minute presentation of your evaluation proposal to the class. Prepare 2 handouts: (1) Outline describing the program and (2) an outline describing your evaluation plan.

Take home weekly assignments: **due January 15, February 12, March 5, and April 2, 2002 (10%)**

There will also be 4 assignments involving exercises or study questions on the material in this course to be done during the week. All weekly assignments will be discussed before the due date. These assignments have been designed to assist you in both learning the course content and writing your papers. They are tools to help you and therefore the focus in grading them is not so much on the content, but on the effort made to do the assignment. They will be graded on a pass/fail basis. A grade of “pass” will be converted to an “A” for computation of the final grade.

In addition to the above, your class attendance and participation will be considered in determining your grade. Assessment of your participation does not depend solely on the quantity of your involvement in class discussion and class exercises, but also on the quality of your contributions.

Format of papers

All papers must be typewritten and double-spaced using a 12 point font and one inch margins. Use APA* for your papers, including proper headings and citations.

I grade all papers for my classes anonymously. With each paper submission, include a title page **without** your name on it, and provide a **separate duplicate title page** with your name. Only after I have read and graded all the papers, will I determine which paper belongs to whom.

General Expectations for Written Work

I expect that in all written work that students will adhere to the following NASW editorial policy:

In the interest of accurate and unbiased communication, the NASW publications program subscribe to a belief in the importance of avoiding language that might imply sexual, ethnic, or other kinds of discrimination, stereotyping, or bias. NASW is committed to the fair and equal treatment of individuals and groups, and material submitted should not promote stereotypic or discriminatory attitudes and assumptions about people. (*Health and Social Work, 11:3, Summer 1986.*)

Plagiarism – not referencing another’s words or ideas – is a violation of academic integrity and will be grounds for failure on an assignment. In addition, papers or journal entries which are completed for another course are not acceptable and will be assigned 0 points. **Please refer to page 50 of your Student Guide to the Master’s in Social Work Degree Program 2000-2002 for further discussion of plagiarism.**

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**Deadline Expectations:** All assignments are due by the start of class, on the dates specified. Incomplete grades are assigned only through negotiation with me and that negotiation must occur before the paper’s due date. Unless an extension contract has been arranged between a student and me, any assignment that is not completed on the due dates will be assigned 0 points. All assignments for this course must be completed and handed in to the instructor to successfully complete and pass the course.

**Grading**

Each assignment will be given a letter grade. The criteria for each grade are as follows:

- **A or A-** Mastery of subject content, demonstration of critical analysis, creativity and/or complexity in completion of assignment. The difference between A and A- is based on the degree to which these skills are demonstrated.
- **B+** Mastery of subject content just beyond expected competency, but has not demonstrated additional critical analysis, creativity or complexity in the completion of the assignment.
- **B** Mastery of subject content at level of expected competency – meets course expectations
- **B-** Less than adequate competency, but demonstrates student learning and potential for mastery of subject content.
- **C or C-** Demonstrates a minimal understanding of subject content. Significant areas needing improvement to meet course requirements.
- **E** Student has failed to demonstrate minimal understanding of subject content.

Both content and format will be considered in assigning grades. Though content is more heavily weighed 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. For assistance with writing, you may go to the Writing Workshop, 1139 Angell Hall, (734) 764-0429.

Before you begin working on class assignments, please read the section in your *Student guide to the master’s in Social Work Degree Program 2001-2002* titled *Writing Term papers and Research papers at the University of Michigan* by Professor Sherrie A. Kossoudji (pp54-66)

I suggest that you have someone who is unfamiliar with your subject read your paper before you turn it in. An outside reader can tell you if your writing is not clear, if you omitted a word or phrase, or if you used the wrong word. Spell checkers and grammar checkers are useful tools, but not as reliable as a human reader.

The course is challenging and demanding. Grading will be rigorous but fair. Final grades will be determined by multiplying the worth of each assignment, by the following grade points: A = 8, A- = 7, B+ = 6, B = 5, B- = 4, C+ = 3, C = 2, C- = 1, less than C- = 0. The numerical scores for each assignment will be summed.

I need to include here a word about grading. I understand that the assessments of your work are subjective in nature and I strive to reduce that subjectivity in two ways. First, as noted above, I grade all papers anonymously. Second, based on the assignment outline that you have received, I use a
template within which I set my expectations for the assignment. I compare your submissions to that template, not to one another.

If you read my comments to you and believe that I have erred, please discuss your findings with me within one week of getting your assignment/paper back. It may be that you do not understand what I have told you, or that I have made a mistake. In either case, I am certain that the situation will be rectified; either you will better understand what I want you to know, or I will correct my error.

7. Course materials

There is one required text, several required readings from materials/journals available in the library or on-line and handouts to supplement the lecture topic.

Required Text


Additional Reading:
Recommended resources or on reserve at the SSW Library (*) that may be helpful to you as you prepare your assignments.


OR


Ware, J. E et al. (1987). *Health outcomes for adults in prepaid and fee-for-service systems of care. Results from the Health Insurance Experiment.* Santa Monica, CA: the RAND Corp.


**Journals that include materials of interest include, but are not limited to the following:**

*Evaluation and Program Planning*  
*Social Problems*  
*American Journal of Public Health (AJPH)*  
*Health Affairs*  
*Health and Social Work*  
*Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA)*  
*Journal of Health Politics, Policy and Law*  
*Maturnal and Child Health Journal*  
*Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Review (MMWR)*  
*New England Journal of Medicine (NEJM)*  
*Public Health Reports*  
*Social Work and Health Care*  
*Social Service Review*  
*Social Work*  
*American Journal on Community Psychology*  
*Behavioral Research Therapy*  
*Child and Adolescent Social Work Journal*  
*Cognitive Therapy and Research*  
*Community Mental Health Journal*  
*Mental Health Services Research*  
*Psychiatric Services (JAPA)*  
*Research on Social Work Practice*  
*Health Services Research*  
*Child Welfare*

**Housekeeping**

**Electronic Devices**
In consideration of your classmates, and due to their disruptive nature, I request that all students turn off all telephones and pagers while you are in my class. This is your time and I want you to be able to protect it. I prefer that you receive no messages during class time, however, if you must be on call for an emergency, please let your home or office knows that you are only available for emergencies that no one else can handle. If you must carry a pager, please set it to vibrate only.

**Special Circumstances**
If there are any circumstances that require that I and/or the class adapt to your special needs, please consult with me as early as possible in the semester so that things can be addressed for you to be successful.

**Religious Observances**
Please notify me if religious observances conflict with class or due dates for assignments so we can make appropriate arrangements.
Class Schedule: SYLLABUS-This Course Schedule is tentative, thus subject to change. All changes will be discussed in advance so that you will have sufficient time to make adjustments in your reading & assignments.

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<th>Class Content/Topic</th>
<th>Readings &amp; Assignments</th>
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**Take home assignment 1 due-** Exercise for developing field placement evaluation plan & choosing evaluation topic

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**Paper 1 Due:** Program Description.
Types of Evaluations:  

Research designs:  
6. Supplemental Handouts

Take home assignment 2 due: Descriptive evaluation activities and assessing change exercise

Measurement in evaluation  

Suggested Readings:
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| 9 3/5/02   | Sampling plan, protection of Human Subjects and informed consents  
Data collection: methods and management. | 3. Supplemental Handouts  
2. Behavioral Sciences IRB web site:  
[www.irb.research.umich.edu/IRB_Health/IRB_Health.html](http://www.irb.research.umich.edu/IRB_Health/IRB_Health.html) (Read handout for investigators and Print the Initial Application Form and bring to class) |
| 10 3/12/02 | Qualitative studies | 1. Rossi and Freeman pp 147-151, 269-271, 422-423  
3. Supplemental Handouts |
| 11 3/19/02 | Empowerment participatory approaches | 1. Supplemental Handouts  
**Paper 2 due:** Research questions, design and measurement |
2. Supplemental Handouts |
4. Supplemental Handouts  
**Take Home assignment 4 due:** data analysis exercises |
| 14 4/9/02   | Class Presentations | |
| 4/16/02    | Class Presentation/Wrap up | **Final Paper Due:** Evaluation Research Design |
| 4/23/02    | Exam period |