I. Course Description
This course will cover beginning level evaluation that builds on basic research knowledge as a method of assessing social work practice and strengthening clients, communities and the social programs, and the systems that serve them. It thus 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.

II. 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 evaluation of social work programs with particular attention to populations at risk, including people of color, women, the poor, people with a disability and people of a different 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 and within the social context.

III. Course Objectives
Upon completion of the 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.
2. Specify a program for evaluation and its theory of change.
3. Recognize and apply evaluation and data collection methods that are appropriate to the evaluation context.
4. Plan an evaluation of social work practice.
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.

6. Critically examine existing evaluation studies for their consistency with the values reflected in the curricular themes.

IV. Course Design

The course will use multiple pedagogical methods, including lectures, participatory discussions, written assignments, student presentations, and experiential exercises. Guest speakers may be invited to address special topics.

V. Relationship of the Course to Four Curricular Themes

1. Multiculturalism and Diversity: Students will develop the capacity to identify ways in which gender, race, ethnicity, social class, sexual orientation, age, and other forms of social stratification and disenfranchisement 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.

2. 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. 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 evaluation participants can mobilize to shift imbalances of power and resources.

3. Promotion and Prevention: Students will develop the capacity to develop and evaluate prevention and promotion, as well as rehabilitation programs, designed to reduce risk of onset of problems and promote healthy development.

4. Social Science: 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.

VI. Role of Instructor and Students

The instructor will encourage critical thinking and participation of students in discussions. She will be available by appointment and during office hours to discuss questions and assignments.

Students will attend class, complete assignments, and participate in class discussions and experiential exercises. If a student has problems with attending class or meeting deadlines for assignments, she or he is expected to discuss them promptly with the instructor. Failure to attend class regularly or complete an assignment when it is due
will result in decreased grade points.

VII. Discussions, Presentations, Mid-term Examination, Written Assignments and Grading Criteria

1. Beginning with the second week of class, two students will be required to lead the discussion for the weekly readings. All students are expected to have read the weekly readings and contribute to the discussion. The instructor will assign discussants as the course progresses. (10 points for discussant role)

2. Students will be required to present an oral presentation on their evaluation proposal during the last class day. Students are encouraged to make handouts and use PowerPoint or overhead transparencies for this presentation. (10 points for oral presentation)

3. Students will be required to take a midterm in-class examination. This short answer examination will cover key concepts and take place on October 10. (40 points for in-class exam)

4. Students will be required to write an Evaluation Proposal valued at 40 points, to be written in two parts (20 points for part 1; 20 points for part 2) This proposal assignment is meant to provide students with methods and skills of social work evaluation as well as grant writing skills.

Part 1: This part of the evaluation proposal focuses on the evaluation problem/program specification, literature review and measurement. It is due on October 31st.

1) Evaluation Problem/program Specification. Working with your field instructor, select a problem/program within the agency for evaluation.
   a. Design a logic model for the evaluation problem/program.
   b. Specify the client and/or system conditions that the problem/program attempts to address.
   c. Delineate assumptions underlying the problem/program.
   d. List the goals and objectives for the problem/program.
   e. Describe the activities that you will undertake to address the problem.
   f. Specify both expected immediate and long-term outcomes and a rationale for why these are expected to occur.
   g. Identify and explicate the involvement of stakeholders in the evaluation process.

Note: Estimated number of pages is 3-4 double-spaced word processed pages for a-f.

2) Literature Review. Conduct and summarize a selective and critical review of the empirical literature on the problem/program (Estimated number of pages is 2-3 double spaced word processed pages).

3) Measurement. Discuss the conceptualization and operationalization of your measures for the problem/program. Identify an instrument/measure that you might use in evaluating the problem/program. Discuss the populations/samples
upon whom the instrument was developed and standardized; reliability and validity of the instrument; and directness, reactivity, and sensitivity of the instrument/measure to change and ease of administration and completion. 

NOTE: If you cannot find an established instrument/measure in the literature and decide to construct your own, you are required to address how you will address reliability and validity issues. (Estimated number of pages 1-2 double-spaced word processed pages).

Part 2: This part of the evaluation proposal focuses on the research design, analysis plan, references and abstracts. You are required to submit both Part 1 and Part 2 of the proposal on December 12. For this final submission, you will want to put the two parts together in a way so that the paper reads as an integrated document.

1) **Research Design: Research Question(s) and Specific Design**
   a. Identify the specific research question(s) you plan to answer in your evaluation
   b. Identify the specific research design you will use to answer the question(s). That is, what specific design you will use to evaluate the problem/program you have described under Part 1?
   c. Diagram your design. If applicable, address how you will form the research groups you need to carry out the design. (Hint: How will you assign members to the groups?)
   d. Address the strengths and limitations of your design in answering the research question(s). That is, how are you able to address threats to internal validity using your design? (Estimated number of pages for a-b is 2-3 double spaced word processed pages).

2) **Research Design: Sample Design** (Hint: Sample selection not assignment)
   a. What type of sample will be used?
   b. What inclusionary criteria will you use for your sample?
   c. How will you recruit, contact, and follow participants?
   d. How will you address problems of low participation and attrition?
   e. How will you protect the rights of participants such as ethical issues of informed consent, voluntary participation, protection of sensitive data, etc.

   (Estimated number of pages is 1-2 double spaced word processed pages).

3) **Analysis Plan**
   Discuss your analysis plan using the appropriate statistical techniques for analyzing data based on the measurement level of outcome measure(s) and the research design identified under Item 1, Research Design. Estimated number of pages is 1-2 double spaced word processed pages).

4) **References** (a minimum of 10 references is required).

5) **Two abstracts** (150 words or less for each; single spaced): a) a technical abstract written in scientific jargon; b) a lay abstract written in journalistic jargon. Note: A technical abstract can be used to disseminate research findings to professional audiences (e.g., a scientific journal or at a conferences), while a lay abstract can be used to disseminate findings to non-professional audiences (e.g., stakeholders)

   (Estimated number of pages is 1 single spaced word processed pages).
Students are required to write the text, citations and references for the proposal using the 5th Edition of the American Psychological (APA) style.

VIII. Summary and Dates of Written Assignments and Grading Scale

- In-class examination on key concepts on October 10th
- Part 1 of Evaluation Proposal due October 31st in class
- Part 2 of Evaluation Proposal due December 12th in class

Grading will be rigorous but fair. Grades are determined by academic performance, not effort. The grading scale is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Range</th>
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<tr>
<td>A</td>
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<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>91-94</td>
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<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>86-90</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>80-85</td>
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<tr>
<td>B -</td>
<td>76-79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>72-75</td>
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<tr>
<td>C</td>
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<tr>
<td>&lt; 70</td>
<td>not passing</td>
</tr>
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</table>

IX. Required Textbook

NOTE: All journal articles are accessible through the URL for electronic reserves http://www.lib.umich.edu/socwork/eresf03.html

The URL for reserve books is http://www.lib.umich.edu/reserves/lists/F03/SOCRES/

X. Dates of classes
Sept 5, 12, 19, 26
Oct 3, 10, 17, 24, 31
Nov 7, 14, 21
Dec 5, 12

Bold denotes due dates of the examination or proposal submission.

Course Topics and Required Readings

Session 1: September 5

Topic: Introductions, Course Overview, Overview of Statistics
1. What is social work evaluation?
2. What is a program?
3. Why should social workers do evaluations?
4. What is the role of social workers as evaluators?
5. What is the role of stakeholders in evaluations?
Electronic Reserve Readings:

Textbook Readings:

**Session 2: September 12**

Topic: Ethical Issues, Values and Cultural Issues in Evaluation

Electronic Reserve Readings:

Textbook Readings:
Royse, D., Thyer, B.A., Padgett, D.K., & Logan, T.K. Chapter 2. Ethical issues in program evaluation. Pp. 30-48. Chapter 13. Pragmatic issues: Political nature of evaluation (pp. 331-332); “Threat” of evaluation (pp. 333-334); Guidelines for evaluation in politically charged arenas (pp. 334-337); Culturally sensitive evaluation practice (pp. 338-341).

**Session 3: September 19**

Topic: Conceptualizing/Specifying Programs in Evaluation

Electronic Reserve Readings:


Textbook Readings:

**Session 4: September 26**

Topic: Needs Assessment in Evaluation

Electronic Reserve Readings:


Textbook Readings:

**Session 5: October 3**

Topic: Measurement Issues in Evaluation

Electronic Reserve Readings:


**Session 6: October 10**

1\textsuperscript{st} half of class: Guest speaker: Ms. Kourtney Rice, A Cluster Evaluation of Faith-Based Programs in the Detroit Metropolitan Area

2\textsuperscript{nd} half of class: Midterm examination

NO ELECTRONIC READINGS

**Session 7: October 17**

Topic: Sampling in Evaluation

Required Reading (Handout from 1\textsuperscript{st} day of class)

Textbook Readings:

Group exercise on sampling.

NO ELECTRONIC READINGS

**Session 8: October 24**

Topic: Process Evaluation

Electronic Reserve Readings:

Textbook Readings:

**Session 9: October 31**
Topic: Program Monitoring and Improvements in Evaluation

Electronic Reserve Readings:

Textbook Readings:

Session 10: November 7

Topic: Conceptualizing/Specifying Outcomes in Evaluation

Electronic Reserve Readings:

Textbook Readings:
Session 11: November 14
Topic: Benefit-Cost Analysis in Evaluation
Electronic Reserve Readings:

Textbook Readings:

Session 12: November 21
Topic: Analysis, Dissemination and Utilization of Knowledge in Evaluation
Textbook Readings:

NO ELECTRONIC READINGS

Nov 28 Thanksgiving Holiday Break

Session 13: Dec 5 Student Presentations

Session 14: Dec 12 Student Presentations, Class Evaluations
Electronic Reserve Readings

Session 1: September 5

Course Overview


Session 2: September 12

Ethical Issues, Values and Cultural Issues in Evaluation


**Session 3: September 19**

Conceptualizing/Specifying Programs in Evaluation


**Session 4: September 26**

Needs Assessment in Evaluation


**Session 5: October 3**

Measurement Issues in Evaluation


**Session 6: October 10**

Guest speaker
In class examination
NO ELECTRONIC READINGS

**Session 7: October 17**
Sampling Issues in Evaluation
NO ELECTRONIC READINGS

**Session 8: October 24**
Process Evaluation


**Session 9: October 31**

Program Monitoring and Improvements in Evaluation

Session 10: November 7

Conceptualizing/Specifying Outcomes in Evaluation


Session 11: November 14

Benefit-Cost Analysis in Evaluation


Session 12: November 21

Analysis, Dissemination and Utilization of Knowledge in Evaluation

NO ELECTRONIC READINGS

Nov 28 Thanksgiving Holiday Break

Session 13: Dec 5 Student Presentations

Session 14: Dec 12 Student Presentations, Class Evaluations

NOTE: Additional readings are assigned from the required course textbook.