Evaluation in Social Work: Course Description

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 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, multi-cultural, and social justice perspectives.

Multiculturalism and Diversity
- Identify ways in which gender, race, ethnicity, social class, age and other forms of social stratification and disenfranchisement influence the evaluation processes and outcomes.
- Because a collaborative, participatory process is critical to evaluation, attention to diversity is imperative for proper implementation of evaluation on social work contexts.

Social Justice and Social Change
- Analyze impact and efficiency of services and policies as they relate to social change and social justice.
- Develop services and programs that could plausibly serve these functions.
- Participatory, collaborative, change-oriented evaluation processes promote achievement of social justice and change.
- Examination of roles of privilege and power in evaluation.
- Development of knowledge, skills and capacities that evaluation participants can mobilize to shift imbalances of power and resources.

Promotion and Prevention
- Develop and evaluate prevention and promotion programs designed to reduce risk and onset of problems and promote healthy development.

Social Science
- Strengthen capacity to use social science literature, both research-based and theoretical, to develop appropriate interventions and evaluations that are feasible, relevant, and scientifically sound.

Course Objectives
1. **Course Objectives:**
Upon completion of the course, students will be able to:

1. Identify ways in which power, privilege, gender, race, ethnicity, social class, age and other forms of social stratification and disenfranchisement influence the evaluation processes and outcomes.
2. Analyze impact and efficiency of services and policies as they relate to social change and social justice.
3. Implement participatory, collaborative, change-oriented evaluation processes that promote achievement of social justice and change.
4. Development of knowledge, skills and capacities that evaluation participants can mobilize to shift imbalances of power and resources.
5. Develop and evaluate prevention and promotion programs designed to reduce risk and onset of problems and promote healthy development.
6. Strengthen capacity to use social science literature, both research-based and theoretical, to develop appropriate interventions and evaluations that are feasible, ethical, accountable, useful and scientifically sound.
7. Evaluate programs and services using the models and tools covered in existing evaluation documents for their consistency with the values reflected in the curricular themes.
8. Implement dissemination strategies that engage policy and/or practice communities with the results and findings of evaluation activities.

**Basic Class Dates:**

**Class begins:** 9/7/04  
**Fall Study Break:** 10/18-10/19/04  
**Class ends:** 12/14/04

**Course Quizzes, Reflection Papers and Projects:**

Exams provide 25% of your final grade;  
Reflection Papers, conducted from September through November, provide 20% of your final grade;  
Evaluation Project provides 55% of your final grade

**Quizzes (20% of Grade): Four graded miniquizzes (with lowest grade dropped):**

Each quiz consists of 5 questions, each worth 20 points. Questions can be of any format. Quizzes will be completed usually during the second hour of class, and are designed to be completed in 20 minutes or less. Students are urged to complete the sample quiz on the course website, available during the second week of classes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component: Quiz Dates:</th>
<th>Material Covered</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>September 28</td>
<td>Up to 9/21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 12</td>
<td>Up to 9/28 (Cumulative)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 16</td>
<td>Up to 11/9 (Cumulative)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 7</td>
<td>Up to 11/30 (Cumulative)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Reflection Papers/Responses (20% of Grade):** Ten due - submitted to CourseTools Website by the Friday preceding class.
Students will submit a reflection paper online (via Coursetools) each week. Reflection papers should reflect upon and integrate material in (at least one of) the readings with your personal experience and/or your field work experience. Postings to coursetools should be brief and concise, about 1 page in length. Reflection papers should be posted every week on the Friday prior to class. Late postings will not earn credit. The reflection entries will count towards 20% of your grade. Reflection papers are graded: 1 point = summary of article(s) + personal reflection, 2 points = summary and integration of articles + personal reflection. Each student may obtain ONE additional point per reflection paper per week if they respond with a brief comment or response (1 paragraph minimum) to another students’ reflection paper.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Due Dates of Reflection Papers</th>
<th>Addresses Content of Readings for:</th>
<th>Point Range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>September 10, 17, 24,</td>
<td>September 14, 21, 28</td>
<td>4 - 12 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 8, 22</td>
<td>October 12, 26</td>
<td>3-9 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 12, 19, 26</td>
<td>November 16, 23, 30</td>
<td>3-9 points</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Evaluation Project Report (50% of Grade):**
Students will break into groups to conduct evaluations of five identified projects of Community Based Initiative interest and development (2002-2004). IRB approval has already been obtained for these projects; of necessity, some approaches and strategies will have already been outlined in general fashion. The strict time constraints argue against individual projects or projects reflecting a student interest outside of the five identified projects.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
<th>Number of Points Possible per Section</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Visual Program Logic Model</td>
<td>Sept. 21</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Background/Significance</td>
<td>Sept. 28</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Data Collection Component</td>
<td>November 9</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Analysis and Findings</td>
<td>November 16</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Report Complete (Draft)</td>
<td>November 23</td>
<td>Ungraded/ feedback provided</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Presentation of Evaluation Report (draft)</td>
<td>November 30</td>
<td>Ungraded/feedback via peer review</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Presentation of Evaluation Report (final)</td>
<td>December 14</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Groups may submit a single project. If groups submit one project, each students’ contribution should be clearly identified. Additionally, I will require that each group member submit to me a grade for all other group members (i.e., group
member A submits a recommended grade for members B and C, member C submits a recommended grade for members A and B, etc.). I will use the recommended grades in the assignment of student grades for all projects.

Format of papers
All papers must be typewritten/electronically generated and double-spaced using a 12 point font and one inch margins. Use APA format for your papers, including proper headings and citations. All papers are graded anonymously. With each paper submission, include a title page without your group name on it, and provide a separate duplicate title page with your group name. Only after I have read and graded all the papers, will I determine which paper belongs to whom.

General Expectations for Written Work
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 2002-2004 for further discussion of plagiarism.

All assignments are due only 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. There are no exceptions to this policy.

Grading
Each assignment will be assigned points, and converted with appropriate weights to a letter grade. The grading policy reflects graduate level (not undergraduate level) expectations. It is critical you understand the grading policy for the class. The criteria for each grade are as follows:

A A document at least submitted (with faculty approval) to, if not published or in press, a peer reviewed academic or professional journal, or an established organ for student research publication. Mastery of subject content, demonstration of critical analysis, creativity and/or complexity in

completion of assignment. Samples of "A" level work are found in journals such as African-American Research Perspectives.  

**A-**  
Mastery of subject content, demonstration of critical analysis, creativity and/or complexity in completion of assignment. Descriptive level analyses are not considered A or A- work, no matter how well done.

**B+**  
Mastery of subject content 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. Descriptive level analyses are typically in the B grade range.

**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.

The course is challenging and demanding. Grading will be rigorous but fair. Grades are determined by academic performance, not effort. Grading criteria for each project assignment is available on the course website. The grading scale is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>95 – 100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>91-94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>86-90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>80-85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>76-79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>72-75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>70-71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&lt; 70</td>
<td>not passing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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 all papers will be graded anonymously. In the case of group projects, I will ask for a cover sheet that clearly outlines each students' contribution or section. I will grade the paper - section by section - 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 and believe I've made a mistake, 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.

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. For assistance with writing, you may go to the Writing Workshop, 1139 Angell Hall, (734) 764-0429.

As well, the best writing is re-writing. 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. I am also available to read and review assignment drafts.

Class Participation. Students are expected to attend every class session, come prepared by doing the required reading, and participate in discussions and exercises. Each week we will engage in group activities and discussion, therefore attendance is very important. Students are expected to attend every class session and participate in discussions and group exercises. Class participation will be worth 20% of your grade. Class participation will be graded based on the self-assessment form that is at the end of this course outline.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Project Assignments</strong></th>
<th><strong>Relevance to Intensive Focus</strong></th>
<th><strong>Course Objectives Addressed</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reflection Papers.</strong>  Students will submit a reflection paper online (via Coursetools) each week. Reflection papers should reflect upon and integrate material in the readings (for each course) with your personal experience and/or your field work experience.</td>
<td>Examine your personal and professional background from social, political and economic contexts. How will your personal and sociocultural background allow you to develop evaluation approaches and tools with individuals who differ from you in terms of gender, ethnicity, SES, political affiliation and worldviews? What can you change? What can you not change?</td>
<td>Objectives 1,6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Course Quizzes</strong>      Quizzes will provide a demonstration of student recognition and familiarity with the evaluation approaches taught within the course.</td>
<td>Demonstrates knowledge of evaluation approaches necessary to mobilize communities and shift imbalances of power and resources. Demonstration of use of social science research and literature to develop appropriate and responsive evaluation approaches</td>
<td>Objectives 4, 5, 6, 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Evaluation Project</strong>  Evaluation teams will work with community partners to evaluate a community based project or project component in Southwest Detroit. Goals are completion of evaluation project, community presentation of project, and ensuring community use of the project (Bowen Public Library, online archive at SWDCN.com).</td>
<td>Evaluation activity incorporates and reflects all aspects of intensive focus</td>
<td>Objectives 1-8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Required Texts:


Coursepack (includes general readings for all students and reading modules for evaluation teams) at Dollar Bill Copying; available immediately.

2. 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.

3. 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.

5. 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 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.

   - **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 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.

   - **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.

6. Relationship of the Course to Social Work Ethics and Values:
Ethical standards of social work practice (the NASW Code of Ethics) and evaluation practice (e.g., Evaluation Standards of the American Evaluation Association, The Joint Committee on Standards for Educational Evaluation’s Program Evaluation Standards) will be used to review issues commonly confronted in the evaluation.

Course Conduct

This class adheres to the following Ground Rules for the Class:

1. Our primary commitment is to learn - from the instructor, from each other, from materials and from our work. We acknowledge differences among us in skills, interests, values, scholarly orientations and experience.
2. We acknowledge that racism, sexism, homophobia and other forms of discrimination exist and are likely to surface from time to time.
3. We acknowledge that one of the meanings of societal oppression and discrimination is that we have been systematically taught misinformation about our own groups and especially members of devalued groups and populations of color. The same is true for sexism, ageism, sexual orientation and other alternative lifestyles - we are taught misinformation about ourselves and others regarding forms of difference and discrimination.
4. We acknowledge that our notions of privilege - privilege of ethnicity, religious belief, gender, sexual orientation and class - can distort our understanding of individuals, families, communities, organizations and infrastructure, and can undermine the development of authentic relationships and understanding.
5. We cannot be blamed for the misinformation that we have heard but we will be held responsible for repeating misinformation after we have learned otherwise.
6. Victims are not to be blamed for their oppression.
7. We will assume that people are always doing the best they can, both to learn material and to behave in socially just and honest ways.
8. We will actively pursue opportunities to learn about our own groups and those of others, yet will not enter or invade others' privacy when unwanted.
9. We will share information about our groups with other members of the class, and will not demand, devalue, or 'put down' people for their experiences.
10. We can have an obligation to actively counter the myths and stereotypes about our own groups and other groups so that we can break down the walls which prohibit group cooperation and group gain.
11. We want to create a safe atmosphere for open discussion. Thus, at times, members of the class may wish to make a comment that they do not want repeated outside the class room. If so, the person will preface the remarks with a request and the class will agree not to repeat the remarks.

7. 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.

**Religious Observances:**
Please notify me if religious observances conflict with class or due dates for assignments so we can make appropriate arrangements.

**Accommodations for students with disabilities:**
If you need or desire an accommodation for a disability, I encourage you to contact me at your earliest convenience. Many aspects of this course, the assignments, the in-class activities, and the way that I teach can be modified to facilitate your participation and progress throughout the semester. The earlier you make me aware of your needs, the more effectively we will be able to use the resources available to us, such as the services for Students with Disabilities, the Adaptive Technology Computing Site, and the like. If you do decide to disclose your disability, I will (to the extent permitted by law) treat that information as private and confidential.

Class Outline
# Course At A Glance: Fall 2004

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topics</th>
<th>Readings</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 9/7  | Introduction, Planning an Evaluation, Community Capacity Development Evaluation, Logic Models | Rossi, Ch. 1; Piontek (2004) An introduction to classroom assessment and program evaluation [class handout]  
Yuen and Terao (2003). Ch. 4 – Developing and Evaluation Plan (pp 46-60), And Ch. 7 – Putting it together: model program and evaluation plans (pp. 100-115). In Yuen and Terao, Practical Grant Writing and Program Evaluation. 2003, Brooks/Cole.  
GAO model of narrative reports (course website pdf) | |
| 9/14 | Evaluation models and approaches | Rossi, Ch 2 and 12;  
**Pick any TWO of the following:**  
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 9/21 | Appreciative Inquiry and Participatory Evaluation | Links on course website:  
Rietbergen-McCracken, Jennifer, and Deepa Narayan, comps. 1998. *Participation and Social Assessment: Tools and Techniques*  
http://www.sustainablemeasures.com |
Quiz #1; Visual Program Logic Model |
Background/Significance |
Mortonstar Case Study (course website)  
Quiz #2; Evaluation Design, Method and Approach CRLT Class Evaluation |
| 10/19 | Fall Study Break: No Class |  |
Burkett, H (2002) ROI on a Shoestring: Evaluation Short-Cuts for Resource-Constrained Environments (handout or pdf on coursetools site) |
| 11/2 | Community Presentations: Posters, PowerPoint, PC | Tufte Handout/Coursetools Website  
Data Collection Component |
| 11/9 | Community Research Day |  
Page 12 |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
|        | **Internet Resources:**                                                | ESRI - [http://www.esri.com](http://www.esri.com)  
GIS.com - [http://www.gis.com](http://www.gis.com)  
United States Census Bureau - [http://www.census.gov](http://www.census.gov) |