Course Title and Number:  SW 740: Practice and Program Evaluation I

Instructors:

Location:

Day and Time:

Contact Information:

Office Hours:

Credits: 2

Prerequisites: SW 640/641 or SW 440/441

Course Description:

Application of practice and program evaluation strategies in varied social work practice settings. This is the first in a two-course sequence with the goal of developing evaluation practice skills. To this end, this course provides opportunities for students to integrate foundational knowledge of evaluation frameworks, skills as consumers of research, and experience in logic model development. The overall goal is to prepare students to become leaders in a social service and health care delivery environment that has become more research and outcomes oriented. A key focus of this course is on understanding the reciprocal relationship between practice and research. At the foundation level students learn to understand and selectively apply published research to practice. At the concentration level, emphasis is placed on applying research skills to improve practice. In this course, emphasis is placed on the beginning stages of evaluation, including learning to 1) collect and analyze administrative agency data; 2) access and analyze epidemiological data that is used to frame an evaluation issue; and 3) develop a logic model that lays out the components of an intervention and the relationships among these components which are theorized to lead to the desired outcomes. Additionally, the course addresses ethical, social justice, measurement, and data collection issues related to evaluation activities with minority or poor clients.

Linkages with Other Courses:

This course builds on and extends the research content contained in SW440/640, SW441/641: Evidence Informed Practice I & II.
Relevant Competencies and Associated Concentration Practice Behaviors:

2.1.1 Identify as a professional social worker and conduct oneself accordingly.
  • C1 Initiate and facilitate socially responsive & just practices across systems.
  • C2 Provide social work leadership within practice contexts and as a member of the profession.
  • C3 Cultivate and apply leadership qualities of self-awareness and other-awareness.

2.1.2 Apply social work ethical principles to guide professional practice.
  • C4 Is able to critique ethical issues within complex environments to formulate innovative responses and approaches.
  • C5 Employ strategies of ethical reasoning in practice settings where policies or values conflict with the delivery of social work services, personal values, or professional ethics.

2.1.3 Apply critical thinking to inform and communicate professional judgments.
  • C6 Question, evaluate, synthesize and apply information from multiple sources in framing ill-defined, ever changing, multifaceted practice issues.
  • C7 Question, evaluate, select and implement appropriate assessment, intervention, and evaluation strategies in complex, fluid, multidimensional practice situations.
  • C8 Produce practice-ready presentations and documents (i.e., case presentations, intervention demonstrations, journal articles, grant applications, legislative briefs).

2.1.4 Engage diversity and difference in practice.
  • C9 Demonstrate leadership in collaboratively examining underlying assumptions and developing interculturally effective policies, programs, & interventions.
  • C10 Effectively navigate conflicts between diverse identities within and among individuals, families, groups and organizations.

2.1.5 Advance human rights and social and economic justice
  • C11 Approach practice with an understanding of the complex and interrelated factors impacting power and oppression (i.e., interconnected—local, regional, nationa & global—factors, both historic and contemporary).

2.1.6 Engage in research-informed practice and practice-informed research.
  • C13 Question and critically evaluate the strength and application of the evidence in regard to assumptions, context, and culture.
  • C14 Employ evaluation frameworks in assessing the impact of interventions, programs, and policies.
  • C15 Collaborate with the research enterprise in identifying and addressing questions emanating from the practice arena.

2.1.7 Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment.
  • C16 Integrate understandings from a variety of theoretical perspectives in formulating comprehensive, multidimensional assessments and interventions.
  • C17 Identify and question underlying theoretical and ontological assumptions about human behavior guiding agency practices, programs and policies.

2.1.8 Respond to contexts that shape practice.
  • C20 Based on evidence, facilitate and formulate innovative responses within ambiguous and changing practice contexts.
  • C21 Critically analyze and apply relevant data and emerging interventions and technologies to evolving practice contexts.

2.1.10 Engage, assess, intervene, and evaluate with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.

2.1.10a Engagement
  • C23 Attend to the interpersonal dynamics, cultural & contextual factors that support or threaten client-worker relationships.
  • C24 Establish a relationally based process that encourages clients to be equal participants in the establishment of intervention goals & expected outcomes.
2.1.10b Assessment
- C25 Adapt, modify & use multidimensional tools in conducting comprehensive, culturally effective, integrative case assessments.
- C26 Identify client system strengths and coping capacities.
- C27 Assess client system readiness for change.
- C28 Select and modify intervention strategies based on continuous evaluation & assessment.

2.1.10c Intervention
- C29 Critically evaluate, select and apply best practices and evidence-informed interventions.
- C30 Capable of autonomous practice, in competently applying appropriate intervention techniques for a range of presenting issues, problems, or questions.
- C31 Develop and implement collaborative multidisciplinary interventions.

2.1.10d Evaluation
- C32 Use process and outcome evaluation findings to inform and shape the ongoing development of social work interventions.

Course Objectives/Learning Outcomes:

Upon completion of this course students will be able to:

740.1 Take leadership in working to improve the wellbeing of clients, families, and communities by using evidence to show the equitable services and just policies across system levels (C3, C11).

740.2 Recognize ethical issues involved in evaluation activities (e.g., the relationship of outcomes and funding) and use strategies of ethical reasoning to explore, navigate and resolve these complex circumstances (C4 & C5).

740.3 Develop a logic model that lays out the components of an intervention or program and the underlying “theory of change.” (C6, C8, C10, C17, C21).

740.4 Critically evaluate several evaluation frameworks, their relationship to evaluation goals and activities, and choose a framework that fits the situation and intended goals (C7, C14, C16, C29, C30).

740.5 Articulate the benefits and challenges of using administrative agency data for evaluative activities and know how and when to proceed to use this data for research or evaluation purposes (C13).

740.6 Identify, access and appropriately use census and epidemiological data for evaluation purposes (C13).

740.7 Critically evaluate and make informed decisions about evaluation methods and design that are scientifically sound and culturally effective (C9, C20, C23).

740.8 Identify, access, and appropriately use census and epidemiological data to show disproportionate distribution of social, economic, and health issues and access to services (C9, C10, C11).
740.9 Use a logic model process to clarify, with agency professionals and other stakeholders, agency activities and outcomes (C2, C20, C23, C32).

740.11 Integrate a variety of data (e.g., census data, published research, agency reports) to frame the issue or situation or provide a baseline for program development (C15, C25).

740.12 Assess organization’s readiness for evaluation as part of evaluation practice (C20).

**Instructional Methods:**

- In addition to lectures and readings, this course will implement a variety of experiential/collaborative learning techniques, including in-class discussions, exercises, and small group activities.

**Standard Course Policies:**

- **Disabilities:** Students who have documented disabilities that may affect their learning or performance in this class should contact the UNR Disability Services Office (Thompson Student Services Building, Suite 100; (775) 784-6000; mzabel@unr.edu). The instructor will make those accommodations that are requested in writing by the aforementioned office.

- **Academic Success Services:** Your student fees cover usage of the Math Center (784-4433) or www.unr.edu/mathcenter/, Tutoring Center (784-6801 or www.unr.edu/tutoring/), and University Writing Center (784-6030 or www.unr.edu/writing_center). These centers support your classroom learning; it is your responsibility to take advantage of their services. Keep in mind that seeking help outside of class is the sign of a responsible and successful student.

- **UNR Counseling Services:** helps students make the most of their university experience, both personally and academically. It is the primary facility on campus for addressing personal, psychological, and mental health and substance abuse treatment needs of both undergraduate and graduate students. The goal in counseling is to help students overcome difficulties they may encounter during their educational experience. For more information visit: http://www.unr.edu/stsv/cs/ or call (775) 784-4648.

- **Academic Dishonesty:** “Cheating, plagiarism or otherwise obtaining grades under false pretenses” constitute academic dishonesty according to the code of this university. Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated and penalties can include canceling a student’s enrollment without a grade, giving an F for the course, or giving an F for the assignment. For more details, see the UNR General Catalog.

- **Audio or Video Recordings:** Surreptitious or covert video-taping of class or unauthorized audio recording of class is prohibited by law and by Board of Regents’ policy. This class may be videotaped or audio recorded only with the written permission of the instructor. In order to accommodate students with disabilities, some students may have been given permission to record class lectures and discussions. Therefore, students should understand that their comments during class may be recorded.
Course Requirements:

**Assigned Reading**

**Required Text**


**Additional reading noted in schedule of classes below:**

Additional readings can be found online via Internet links provided and/r on electronic reserve. (UNR Electronic Researves: [http://ares.library.unr.edu/ares](http://ares.library.unr.edu/ares))

**Recommended Text**


**Assignments**

The following is a description of the assignments. Detailed instructions will be provided in class.

1. **Engaged Participation (10 points)**

The faculty of the School of Social Work believe that class attendance and participation are critical aspects of the professional socialization process. Students are responsible for assisting in the creation of a learning environment that promotes professional socialization and learning. Students are expected to assume responsibility for their learning environment by: coming to class prepared and on time, participating in class-related activities, and consulting with peers and the instructor outside of class as needed. It is the responsibility of the student to consult with the instructors regarding absences from class. Attendance and participation will be part of grading as determined by the course instructor. Opportunities for make-up assignments are determined at the discretion of the course instructors as well.

* Note: The schedule of classes contains “student-directed” assigned readings and in class activities. For the indicated weeks, students are expected to locate, read, and be prepared to discuss credible readings that pertain to their own evaluation project.

2. **Evidence Critique Partner Presentation (10 points)**

Each student will be paired with a classmate and assigned to a specific presentation day. Together, the students must present a “practice-ready” critical analysis of “evidence” from one article in a peer reviewed journal.

3. **Situational Analysis (30 points)**

An understanding of the social problem and associated interventions is the first step in developing a useful logic model. The situation analysis includes 4 parts:

a. Census Data—to frame the issue or problem or show the scope of the problem.
b. Administrative Agency Data—to document the demographic characteristics of the population served, the gaps in service, or trends in service.
c. Literature review that includes peer-reviewed articles and websites to provide information about the population/issue, major “players” in this area, definitions of how the problem/issue is conceptualized, and trends.
d. A synthesis of the above information (a.-c.) in a brief report format (5 pages).

4. SW 740 Evaluation Beliefs Study (25 points)
This classroom-based project provides an experiential exercise of collecting and analyzing data about evaluation activities. There are 4 components:
   b. Descriptive statistics of quantitative responses
   c. Theme analysis of qualitative data

5. Logic Model (25 points)
Utilizing the information developed in the situation analysis, students will prepare a theory of change and create a logic model outlining details of an existing or proposed “response” to the identified problem or issue. Students will be required present a poster during the final exam and submit this with accompanying narrative.

Grading:
Students will be graded based on engaged participation and the assignments detailed above. Specific criteria for each assignment will be given out in class. The following percent of total points will be used to determine letter grades:

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<td>64 – 66</td>
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Sample Schedule of Classes

The following schedule is subject to change in order to adapt to learning needs and opportunities.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>TOPIC</th>
<th>ASSIGNED READINGS &amp; ASSIGNMENTS DUE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Unit One: Evaluation Context</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 1 8/30</td>
<td>Program development and program evaluation</td>
<td>Grinnell, Gabor &amp; Unrau: Chapter 1, 2 (p. 29-33)</td>
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| Week 2 9/6 | Evidence-Based Practice  
|            | Becoming a professional evaluator          | Grinnell, Gabor & Unrau: Chapters 2 (p. 34-46) & 5                                                    |
|            |                                             | American Evaluation Association – Guiding Principles for Evaluators  |
|            |                                             | http://www.eval.org/publications/guidingprinciples.asp                                            |
|            |                                             | NREPP: nrepp.samhsa.gov                                                                            |
| Week 3 9/13| Eval types/purpose  
|            | Evaluability assessment  
<p>|            | Identifying stakeholders                    | Grinnell, Gabor &amp; Unrau: skim chapters 6-9                                                             |
|            |                                             | Stepney &amp; Rostila, <em>Towards an Integrated Model of practice evaluation balancing Accountability, Critical Knowledge and Developmental Perspectives</em> |
|            |                                             | Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, Stakeholder Engagement:                                             |</p>
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<td><strong>Unit Two: Situational Analysis</strong></td>
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| **Week 4** 9/20 | Situational Analysis, Part 1: Getting started, identifying stakeholders, making a plan | Grinnell, Gabor & Unrau: Chapter 6 (pgs. 117-126)  
Bardach (2005) Appendix C. (Course Reserves)  
Simpson (2009). (Course reserves)  
University of Wisconsin Cooperative Extension: Situational Analysis (plus resources)  
http://www.uwex.edu/ces/pdande/progdev/sitanalysis.html  
*Student-directed: 2 articles  
Descriptions of a broad "social problem" | Nick Tayler |
| **Week 5** 9/27 | NASW Conference | To what extent did “evidence” inform the workshops’ content? | |
Hetling (2011). (course reserves).  
* Student-directed: 2 articles  
*Suggested search ideas: “[population/issue]” and “review article”, How is the population/issue defined? What are the trends? Who are the major “players” in this area?  
* Student-directed: locate 1 national survey that has information on your issue/population, locate the government agency responsible for your issue/population | Lauren Aaron  
Chris Yeeymmy |
| **Week 7** 10/11 | Situational Analysis, Part 3: Framing the issue, synthesize findings, identify gaps in information, tools for filling gaps | University of Wisconsin Cooperative Extension: Situational Analysis (plus resources)  
http://www.uwex.edu/ces/pdande/progdev/sitanalysis.html  
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<tr>
<td><strong>Unit Three: Working with Data</strong></td>
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<td>Week 8</td>
<td>Producing data to fill in the gaps (i.e. stakeholder surveys)</td>
<td>University of Wisconsin Cooperative Extension: Situational Analysis (Tools) <a href="http://www.uwex.edu/ces/pdande/progdev/sitanalysis.html">http://www.uwex.edu/ces/pdande/progdev/sitanalysis.html</a> ** working session, bring lap top computers</td>
<td>Katherine Megan Megan Miranda Alexis</td>
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<td>10/18</td>
<td>Creating a database</td>
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<td>Week 9</td>
<td><strong>Nevada Day</strong></td>
<td><strong>Nevada Day</strong></td>
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<td>10/25</td>
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<td>DUE: Situational Analysis</td>
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<td>Week 10</td>
<td><strong>CSWE Conference</strong></td>
<td>Grinnell, Gabor &amp; Unrau: Chapter 6 (pgs. 139-142)</td>
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<td>Database working session: Compile raw data for Evaluation Beliefs Study. Quantitative data must be in Excel. Qualitative responses must be type written. With a partner, conduct theme analysis of qualitative data (independently rated).</td>
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<td>Week 11</td>
<td>Compiling quantitative &amp; qualitative data</td>
<td>Leask, et al. (2009). Implementation of the Australian HPV vaccination program for adult women: Qualitative key informant interviews. <em>Vaccine</em>. 27 (40) **working session, bring lap top computers</td>
<td>Emily Susan</td>
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<td>11/8</td>
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<td>DUE: Evaluation Beliefs Study, quantitative &amp; qualitative raw data and initial theme analysis of qualitative data (bring electronic &amp; hard copies to class).</td>
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<td><strong>Unit Four: Describe the Intervention &amp; Link to the Situation</strong></td>
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<td>Week 12</td>
<td>Building a theory of change – linking to needs, identifying assumptions</td>
<td>Grinnell, Gabor &amp; Unrau: Chapter 3 Knowlton &amp; Phillips: Chapter 2 <strong>DUE: Report of Findings for Evaluation Beliefs Study</strong></td>
<td>Joel Diana Nicole Diana Joanna</td>
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<td>11/15</td>
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<td>Week 13</td>
<td><strong>Family Day</strong></td>
<td><strong>Family Day</strong></td>
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<td>11/22</td>
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<td>Week 15</td>
<td>Logic Modeling</td>
<td>Knowlton &amp; Phillips: Chapter 6-8 <strong>Student-directed: bring first draft of logic model</strong></td>
<td>Betty Jane Patrick</td>
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<td>12/6</td>
<td>Eval Types/Purposes</td>
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<td>Final</td>
<td>Logic Model Poster Session</td>
<td><strong>LOGIC MODEL POSTER SESSION</strong> <strong>DUE: Theory of Change and Logic Model</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Class</td>
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Suggested Readings and Resources

American Evaluation Association Coffee Break Series
http://comm.eval.org/coffee_break_webinars/CoffeeBreak/

http://www.eval.org/aea05.cr.BoardApproved2.pdf

Coalition for Evidence-Based Policy
http://evidencebasedprograms.org

Community Tool Box

FRIENDS: National Resource Center for Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention – Evaluation Toolkit
http://friendsnrc.org/home

Nevada Differential Response Final Evaluation Report


Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, National Registry of Evidence-Based Programs and Practices
Http://nrepp.samhsa.gov

Substance Abuse Prevention and Intervention Services Program Highlights from the 2008–2009 Statewide Evaluation Dennis Deck, Ph.D., RMC Research Corporation
http://www.rmccorp.com/Project/Pteval/Highlights.pdf

The Innovation Center for Community and Youth Development, Evaluation Methods

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, Dissemination Planning Tool
http://www.ahrq.gov/qual/advances/planningtool.htm#sect6

University of Wisconsin Cooperative Extension: Program Development and Evaluation
http://www.uwex.edu/ces/pdande/

Western Michigan University – Evaluation Center Checklists
http://www.wmich.edu/evalctr/checklists/evaluation-checklists/

Writing an Evaluation Report
References


