I. COURSE PURPOSE

Building upon the foundation research course, this course presents the basic theoretical and methodological concepts of program evaluation and seeks to engage students in a critical examination of research evidence. The class includes quantitative and qualitative approaches, non-experimental and experimental designs, and statistical and other analytical techniques. Students are challenged to think about evaluation in the context of the budget and time limitations that exist within agencies. Through writing a research proposal, the students will apply their knowledge to a real world situation. Attention is given to ethical concerns in program evaluation as well as to issues related to research with diverse and at-risk populations.

II. EDUCATIONAL OBJECTIVES

1. To appreciate the purposes of evaluation as used by social workers.

2. To understand research designs used in program evaluation.

3. To recognize the strengths and limitations of each research design.

4. To be aware of the ethical and value issues that arise in conducting program evaluation studies.
5. To be able to select appropriate measurement strategies in developing an evaluation plan.

6. To know the statistical methods used in program evaluation.

7. To appreciate the procedures used in conducting a qualitative evaluation.

8. To understand the impact of budgetary and time limitations on evaluation design.

9. To recognize the political and social implications of program evaluation results.

10. To appreciate the need for agencies to invest in program evaluation activities and to offer evidence based services to people in need.

11. To understand the connection between program evaluations with vulnerable populations and the promotion of economic and social justice.

12. To demonstrate competence in developing a reasoned critique of a published social work program evaluation study.

13. To exhibit proficiency in developing and writing a proposal for conducting a social work program evaluation study.

III. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

A. Required Texts


Other required readings are available through web links or Blackboard.
B. Recommended Texts


C. Other Recommended Resources and Media

National Catholic School of Social Service: http://ncsss.cua.edu/
University of Wisconsin—Extension, Program Development and Evaluation: http://www.uwex.edu/ces/pdande/evaluation/

D. Course Assignments

Assignment 1: Assessment of Agency Evaluation and Research Activities. Each student is required to complete an interview with his or her field instructor to determine the degree to which program evaluation activities are occurring within the agency, how the results of the evaluation are being used by the agency, and how individual social workers are involved in evaluation activities. This interview should be summarized in a 2 to 3 page descriptive paper. Due Class 3.

Assignment 2: Evaluation Proposal—Part 1. Students are required to develop an evaluation plan suitable for submission as part of a grant proposal. The assignment will be divided into two parts. Part 1 will include the problem statement, literature search, evaluation question(s), and whether the question(s) will be addressed through a needs assessment, process evaluation, or outcome evaluation. This 6 to 8 page paper should be written in APA style. Due Class 7.

Assignment 3: Critical Review of Assigned Articles. In classes 5, 6, and 7 articles from the program evaluation literature are assigned. The student will write two 2-page critical reviews discussing the research problem, methodology, data analysis, and findings. APA style is expected. Both reviews are turned in together. Due Class 9.

Assignment 4: Evaluation Proposal—Part 2. This section of the evaluation proposal will include the research design, sampling plan, data collection and
analysis plan, and policy and/or programmatic implications. Students should revise Part 1, based on the instructor’s comments, in order to make it consistent with Part 2. The grade for Part 1 will not be changed, but the paper as a whole will be graded for Part 2. Part 2 is an additional 6 to 8 pages. **Due Class 13.**

**Assignment 5: Final Examination.** An in-class final examination will be held during the University exam period. Date to be discussed.

E. **Grading Policy**

Grades will be based on the University grading system as described in the Graduate Announcements.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assessment of Agency</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Critical Reviews (10% each)</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation Proposal—Part 1</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation Proposal—Part 2</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Examination</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class Participation</td>
<td>10%</td>
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Full credit will not be given for assignments that are submitted late. No credit will be given for work submitted after the assignment has been reviewed in class.

F. **Preparation, Attendance & Participation**

Students will be evaluated on their participation in class, their ability to relate class readings and experiences to the discussions, and their interpretation of the case examples. Students should inform the professor in advance if they will not be in class.

Students are required to attend classes and are expected to participate meaningfully in class discussion/exercises. The class participation grade will be determined by the instructor’s perception of the student’s preparation for and contributions to class discussion/activities. Different students will make different kinds of contributions. Some will have an easy time with spontaneous interactions while others will be more comfortable making planned statements about key ideas from the readings or other sources. Both types of contributions are valued. Unexcused absences will lower the attendance and participation grade. More than three unexcused absences will result in a grade of F.

G. **Course and Instructor Evaluation**

NCSSS requires electronic evaluation of this course and the instructor. At the end of the semester, the evaluation form may be accessed at [http://evaluations.cua.edu/evaluations](http://evaluations.cua.edu/evaluations) using your CUA username and password.
Additional, informal written or verbal feedback to the instructor during the semester is encouraged and attempts will be made to respond to requests.

H. Grades of Incomplete

A provisional grade of ‘I’ (Incomplete) may be given to a student who, for legitimate reasons (e.g. serious illness of self or family; death of family member, spouse, or significant other; or personal crisis - determined valid at the discretion of the professor) has not completed the requirements of a course, provided that work already completed is of passing quality. When there are no assignments due until the end of a course, an ‘I’ may be granted at the discretion of the professor based on attendance and active participation. In order for a student to receive an ‘I’ an Incomplete Approval Form must be completed and signed by the student and the instructor.

The grade of Incomplete must be removed before the midterm date specified in the academic calendar for the succeeding term, whether or not the student is registered. If a student has not resolved a grade of ‘I’ by mid-semester of the succeeding term, s/he will not be permitted to register for an upcoming semester. If an Incomplete is not replaced by a passing grade before the midterm of the succeeding term, a grade of 'F' (Failure) will be recorded.

IV. CLASS EXPECTATIONS

A. Scholastic Expectations

Please refer to NCSSS Announcements or the appropriate Program Handbook for Academic Requirements, including scholastic and behavioral requirements. All written work should reflect the original thinking of the writer, cite references where material is quoted or adapted from existing sources, adhere to APA format, and be carefully proofread by the student before submission to the instructor for grading.

B. Academic Honesty

Joining the community of scholars at CUA entails accepting the standards, living by those standards, and upholding them. Please refer to University Policy and appropriate Program Handbooks.

C. Accommodations

Students with physical, learning, psychological, or other disabilities wishing to request accommodations must identify with the Disability Support Services (DSS) and submit documentation of a disability. If you have documented a disability to DSS that requires accommodations or an academic adjustment, please arrange a meeting with the instructor as soon as possible to discuss these accommodations.
Class Schedule

Class | Topics and Readings

1 | **Overview of Statistics and Research Terms**

**Required Reading**

NCSSS Review sheet: Distributed in class

Salkind, Chapter 1: Statistics or sadistics? It’s up to you

Yuen & Terao, Chapter 1: Rationality and reality of program planning

Yuen & Terao, Chapter 2: Planning, evaluating and grant writing

Yuen & Terao, Chapter 3: Grant proposal: A written program plan


Read the section on Myths about Program Evaluation and review the rest of the document so you can use it as a reference when writing your papers.

2 | **Introducing Program Evaluation, Identifying Issues, and Formatting Questions**

**Required Reading**

Rossi, Chapter 1: An overview of program evaluation

Rossi, Chapter 2: Tailoring evaluations

Rossi, Chapter 3: Identifying issues and formulating questions

3 | **Developing and Using Logic Models**

**Required Reading**


4 Developing Program Theory and Needs Assessment

**Required Reading**

Rossi, Chapter 4: Assessing the need for a program

Rossi, Chapter 5: Expressing and assessing program theory


Salkind, Chapter 7: Hypotheticals and you: Testing your questions

5 Conducting Process Evaluations

**Required Reading**

Rossi, Chapter 6: Assessing and monitoring program process


Salkind, Chapter 11: t(ea) for two: Tests between the means of different groups

Salkind, Chapter 12: t(ea) for two (again): Tests between the means of related groups

6 Evaluating Outcomes I

Required Reading

Rossi, Chapter 7: Measuring and monitoring program outcomes


Bamberger, Chapter 14: Sampling for real world evaluation


Salkind, Chapter 6: Just the truth: An introduction to understanding reliability and validity

7 Evaluating Outcomes II

Required Reading

Rossi, Chapter 8: Assessing program impact: Randomized field experiments

Rossi, Chapter 9: Assessing program impact: Alternative designs


Salkind, Chapter 17: What to do when you’re not normal—Chi-square and some other nonparametric tests

8 Analyzing Data for Program Evaluation

**Required Reading**

Rossi, Chapter 10: Detecting, interpreting, and analyzing program effects


Salkind, Chapter 9: Significantly significant: What it means for you and me

Salkind, Chapter 12: Two groups too many? Try analysis of variance

Salkind, Chapter 15: Cousins or just good friends? Testing relationships using the correlation coefficient

9 Conducting Cost Benefit and Cost Effectiveness Analyses

**Required Reading**

Rossi, Chapter 11: Measuring efficiency


10 Using Qualitative Methods in Program Evaluation

**Required Reading**

Bamberger, Chapter 12: Qualitative evaluation methods


11 Developing an Evaluation Proposal—I

**Required Reading**

Bamberger, Chapter 3: Not enough money: Addressing budget constraints

Royse, D., Thyer, B., & Padgett, D. Chapter 15: Writing evaluation proposals, reports, and journal articles.

Contents of an evaluation plan: [http://managementhelp.org/evaluation/program-evaluation-guide.htm#anchor1586742](http://managementhelp.org/evaluation/program-evaluation-guide.htm#anchor1586742)


Yuen & Terao, Chapter 4: Developing an evaluation plan
12 Developing an Evaluation Proposal—II

Required Reading

Salkind, Chapter 4: A picture really is worth a thousand words

Salkind, Chapter 21: The ten commandments of data collection

Yuen & Terao, Chapter 5: Strategies and tools for data collection

Yuen & Terao, Chapter 6: Data analysis and reporting

13 Putting It Together: Model Program

Required Reading

Bamberger, Chapter 16: Bringing it all together: Applying real world evaluation approaches to each stage of the evaluation process


Yuen & Terao, Chapter 7: Putting it together: Model program and evaluation plans

14 Using Evaluation Results

Required Reading

Rossi, Chapter 12: The social context of evaluation


Yuen & Terao, Chapter 8: Program planning and evaluation: Practical considerations and implications

15 Final Examination—TBA