

COURSE TITLE/SECTION: SOCW 7305 (18649) Evaluation of Practice

TIME: Tuesdays 8:30am – 11:30am Rm: SW 231

FACULTY: Allen Rubin, Ph.D.

OFFICE HOURS: Monday 4-5 PM, Tuesday 11:30-1 PM, or by appointment. SW342

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I. Course

A. Catalog Description

Quantitative and qualitative methods to analyze clinical, administrative, program, and policy data for practice evaluation.

B. Purpose

This advanced research course prepares students to conduct practice evaluation in micro, mezzo, and macro settings. It focuses on formulating evidence-based questions on practice evaluation, selecting appropriate designs and measurements, and reporting results with descriptive statistics and qualitative data analysis.

II. Course Objectives

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to demonstrate the following:

1. explain how practice evaluation is an integral part of social work practice;
2. develop measurable goals for practice evaluation with individuals, groups, organizations and communities;
3. formulate research questions for evaluating practice within the context of appropriate conceptual and theoretical frameworks;
4. describe and utilize a variety of research designs and methods (pre-post comparisons, process and outcome evaluations) that test effectiveness of services and programs;
5. select appropriate measures or tools to evaluate practice in a variety of practice settings;
6. design an evaluation study to support accountability in social work practice;
7. use appropriate statistics and qualitative methods to analyze practice outcomes;
8. examine, produce, and critique evidence-based and other research reports and make recommendations to improve practice effectiveness;
9. demonstrate awareness of research and practice ethics that takes into

account diversity and differences including, but not limited to, gender, age, class, race/ethnicity, sexual orientation, and culture.

III. Course Content

This course will include the following topical (content) areas:

1. The utility, purposes and types of practice evaluation and relevant philosophical, ethical, and cultural issues.
2. How to plan an evaluation, including the use of logic models and selecting and operationally defining program objectives.
3. How to conduct a needs assessment.
4. Using qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods in evaluating practice and programs.
5. Constructing measurement instruments.
6. Measurement and sampling issues and techniques in the evaluation of programs and practice.
7. Designs for evaluating program and practice effectiveness and efficiency.
8. Analyzing and presenting descriptive and inferential evaluation data.
9. Pragmatic and political issues in program evaluation and ways to enhance the feasibility of evaluation.

IV. Course Structure

A variety of teaching methods will be used during the course of the semester, including lecture, guest speakers, class discussion, and group/class activities. This course will require active participation and interaction, with the goal of stimulating critical thinking, in-depth understanding of the material, and an appreciation of the use of research methodology and tools to evaluate social work practice. A mutually respectful and professional environment is expected.

**The instructor reserves the right to change the course schedule or due dates as necessary during the semester.

V. Textbooks

Required:

Royse, D., Thyer, B.A., & Padgett, D.K. (2016). *Program Evaluation: An Introduction to an Evidence-Based Approach* (6th ed.). Belmont, CA: Thomson.

Other required readings will be posted on Blackboard under the date that each reading is due.

Recommended:

Rubin, A., and Babbie, E. (2016). *Essential Research Methods for Social Work*, 4th Edition. Belmont, CA: Cengage.

VI. Course Requirements

A. Reading Assignments:

Reading assignments will be primarily from the Royse, Thyer, and Padgett (2016) text. Additional required readings are listed on the course schedule and will be posted on Blackboard.

B. Exams (50 points):

There will be two exams covering the reading material and course content. Each exam is worth 25 points for a total of 50 points. Exams will test students' ability to recall, understand, apply, analyze and synthesize course content. Students are encouraged to read course materials with the goal of achieving understanding, an ability to integrate course material and apply it to real-world situations.

C. Quizzes (20 points):

Given the experiential nature of this course, completion of the required readings before class is essential to maximize student participation and learning. To encourage these readings, **there will be a 5-item true/false quiz at the beginning of 10 designated class sessions.** Each quiz will assess whether the students read and recall the main points of the assigned readings for that session. The overall percentage of correct answers across all but 3 quizzes will account for 20 percent of the course grade. The 3 quizzes with the lowest number of correct answers will be dropped from this calculation. ***Regardless of the reason for absences or tardiness***, any quizzes that are missed due to absence or tardiness will be included among the 3 dropped quizzes. If more than 3 quizzes are missed (*regardless of the reason*), those additional quizzes will be included (with a score of zero) in the overall calculation. Each quiz will begin at the start of each class session and will end 10 minutes later. Students must turn in their completed quiz at that 10-minute interval regardless of what time they arrive in class and *regardless of the reason for tardiness*. Because so many quizzes will be dropped from the calculation, *no matter how serious, justifiable, or tragic the reason for the absence or tardiness*, students will not be permitted to make up any missed quizzes or to continue taking a quiz after the 10-minute interval has elapsed.

D. Team Homework Assignments (20 points):

Teams comprised of 3-4 students will submit 2 homework assignments, each of which is worth up to 10 points, depending on the comprehensiveness and quality of the submitted work. If any team members feel that any other team members are not equitably sharing the project workload or trying hard enough, they are expected to discuss the problem and try to resolve it as a team. No team member will have their grade affected by such concerns, and each team member will receive the same project grade. Students are NOT required to stay on the same team for each assignment. The assignments are as follows:

1. (Due before class on September 29) Construct a questionnaire for a quantitative survey of 2nd year GCSW students regarding the following:
 - a. Their characteristics (age, sex, ethnicity, GCSW concentration, etc.)
 - b. Their satisfaction with the GCSW (create a student satisfaction scale)
 - c. Strongest and weakest aspects of the GCSW
 - d. Needed revisions in the GCSW program

Put the survey on Survey Monkey and submit an electronic copy of it to the instructor before our September 29 class session. Each group's survey will be critically appraised in the Week 6 class session.

2. (Due before class on October 20) This assignment is online in Blackboard with the file heading: Sampling Homework.
It contains a made-up list of 200 fictional names of fictional service recipients. Beside each name is the person's fictional ethnicity, their fictional level of satisfaction with services, and whether (in this fictional depiction) they would reply to a mailed questionnaire about their satisfaction with services. At the end of the list are 4 exercises. You are required to email the instructor a word file with your answers to each exercise.
For the first 3 exercises, you are also required to email the 40 cases selected each time, including their case number (between 1 and 200) along with the corresponding satisfaction score. (This is to increase the chances that your calculation of the means will be careful and accurate, and to enable the instructor to check your calculations in case any of your means appears to be dubious.)

E. Class Participation (10 points) :

You can earn up to 10 points for thoughtful class participation. Class participation includes participating in class/group discussions and exercises, not working on other course work or personal matters during class (including using cell phones or computers), and consistently attending and being on time to class. Attendance is not only expected, but is necessary for you to be successful in this class.

A mutually respectful and professional environment is expected at all times. This includes turning off cell phones before class and not using laptops for personal use during class. Cell phone rings, text messaging, and the use of laptops can be very distracting to others who are trying to learn, and for this reason, I do not tolerate it. For students for whom laptops are an essential tool for note taking, please sit in the back row of class (where the use of computers is less likely to distract others), and restrict computer use solely to note taking.

- F. Extra Credit:** There is an opportunity for earning extra credit in this class to encourage additional learning activities outside the classroom. You may select to complete one or both of the options below, each of which can

earn up to 5 points of extra credit. The extra credit assignment(s) must be turned in by the last day of class to receive credit, no exceptions.

a. Online logic model training: If you are interested in learning more about program planning and evaluation, there is an online course on logic models provided by the University of Wisconsin posted on Blackboard under September 2nd (or available here: <http://www.uwex.edu/ces/lmcourse/>). You can earn **up to 5 points** extra credit if you complete the video and course and then provide: 1) a print out of the webpage that documents completion of the online course, and 2) a 1 pg. summary that details what you learned from these sources and how logic models may help you in your future practice.

b. SAMMIE (Successful Assessment Methods and Measurement in Evaluation) Web Portal (up to 5 points): If you are interested in expanding your knowledge and skills in program evaluation, there is an online program provided by The Great Lakes Center for Agricultural Safety and Health, Ohio State University Extension Office of Program Development and Evaluation, and U CARES/OSU Extension: <http://sammie.osu.edu/>. You will need to set up an account. You can earn **up to 5 points** extra credit if you complete this course and provide: 1) the print outs of the webpage that documents successful completion (at least 70%) of the “Testing Your Knowledge” quizzes, and 2) a 1 pg. summary that details what you learned from the 10 modules and how it may help you in your future practice.

Requirements:

- a. Complete Modules #1-8.
- b. Choose and Complete 2 additional Modules (9 through 22).
- c. For each Module, you will complete the:
 - Readings
 - Watch the “Ready for Action” video or read the video script.
 - Complete “Testing Your Knowledge” quizzes & print results (if applicable).
 - Write a 1-page summary of what you learned from the 10 modules and how it may help your practice.
- d. Write a 1-page summary of what you learned from the 10 modules and how it may help your practice.

VII. Evaluation and Grading

The following standard grading scale has been adopted for all courses taught in the college. Please use this scale to assign final course letter grades.

A =	96-100% of the points	C+ =	76-79.9%
A- =	92-95.9%	C =	72-75.9%
B+ =	88-91.9%	C- =	68-71.9%
B =	84-87.9%	D =	64-67.9%
B- =	80-83.9%	F =	Below 64%

VIII. Policy on grades of I (Incomplete):

The grade of "I" (Incomplete) is a conditional and temporary grade given when students are either **(a)** passing a course or **(b)** still have a reasonable chance of passing in the judgment of the instructor but, for non-academic reasons beyond their control have not completed a relatively small part of all requirements.

Students are responsible for informing the instructor immediately of the reasons for not submitting an assignment on time or not taking an examination. Students must contact the instructor of the course in which they receive an "I" grade to make arrangements to complete the course requirements. Students should be instructed not to re-register for the same course in a following semester in order to complete the incomplete requirements.

The grade of "I" must be changed by fulfillment of course requirements within one year of the date awarded or it will be changed automatically to an "F" (or to a "U" [Unsatisfactory] in S/U graded courses). The instructor may require a time period of less than one year to fulfill course requirements, and the grade may be changed by the instructor at any time to reflect work completed in the course.

The grade of "I" may not be changed to a grade of **W**.

IX. Policy on academic dishonesty and plagiarism

Students are expected to demonstrate and maintain a professional standard of writing in all courses, do one's own work, give credit for the ideas of others, and provide proper citation of source materials. Any student who plagiarizes any part of a paper or assignment or engages in any form of academic dishonesty will receive an "I" for the class with a recommendation that a grade of F be assigned, subsequent to a College hearing, in accordance with the University policy on academic dishonesty. Other actions may also be recommended and/or taken by the College to suspend or expel a student who engages in academic dishonesty.

All presentations, papers and written assignments must be fully and properly referenced using APA style format (or as approved by the instructor), with credit given to the authors whose ideas you have used. If you are using direct quotes from a specific author (or authors), you must set the quote in quotation marks or use an indented quotation form. For all direct quotes, you must include the page number(s) in your text or references. Any time that you use more than four or five consecutive words taken from another author, you must clearly indicate that this is a direct quotation. Please consult the current APA manual for further information.

Academic dishonesty includes using any other person's work and representing it as your own. This includes (but is not limited to) using graded papers from students who have previously taken this course as the basis for your work. It also includes, but is not limited to submitting the same paper to more than one class. It also includes securing another person to complete any required activities, assignments, quizzes, papers, or exams in an online course, or in any on-line environment. If you have any specific questions about plagiarism or academic dishonesty, please raise these questions in class or make an appointment to see

the instructor. This statement is consistent with the University Policy on Academic Dishonesty that can be found in your UH Student Handbook.

On the day exams are given, **cell phones or “smart” phones of any kind are not allowed during the time an exam is given.** If a student is observed using an electronic device during an exam, the student will be asked to leave the exam and will receive a score of zero.

X. Course Schedule and Reading Assignments

Date	TOPIC AND READINGS
August 25	<p>Introductions; Overview of course; Why evaluate; Evidence-Based Practice Overview; Evaluation purposes and types; Philosophical paradigms; Ethical and cultural Issues.</p> <p>Required Readings: Royse et al. Chapters 1-2</p> <p>Recommended Readings: Rubin & Babbie (2016) Chapters 4 and 6</p>
September 1	<p>Planning an Evaluation; Logic Models; Selecting and operationally defining program objectives</p> <p>Required Readings: Royse et al. Chapter 5</p> <p>Recommended Readings: Rubin & Babbie (2016) Pages 129-134</p>
September 8	<p>Needs assessment; Qualitative and mixed evaluation methods; Qualitative focus group interviewing</p> <p><u>QUIZ #1</u></p> <p>Readings Due for This Class: Royse et al. Chapters 3 & 4</p> <p>Recommended Readings: Rubin & Babbie (2016) Pages 307-309</p>
September 15	<p>Qualitative focus group interviewing exercise: See handout at end of syllabus</p> <p><u>QUIZ #2</u></p> <p>Readings Due for This Class: Royse et al. Chapters 3 & 4</p>
September 22	<p>Constructing Quantitative Measurement Instruments</p> <p><u>QUIZ #3</u></p> <p>Readings Due For This Class:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Royse et al. Chapter 7 and pages 317-327 2) Rubin, A., and Babbie, E. (2016). <i>Essential Research Methods for Social Work</i>, 4th Edition, pp. 158-167 <p>In class team exercise to be completed as HOMEWORK due before next week</p>

September 29	<p>Discussion of completed homework</p> <p>Quantitative measurement in program evaluation</p> <p><u>QUIZ #4</u></p> <p>Readings Due For This Class:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Royse et al. Chapters 11 & 12 2) Rubin, A. & Bellamy, J. (2012). <i>Practitioner's guide to using research for evidence-based practice</i>, 2nd Ed., Ch. 11 <p>Recommended Reading: Rubin & Babbie (2016) Chapter 8</p>
October 6	<p><u>EXAM 1</u></p>
October 13	<p>Sampling for program evaluation surveys</p> <p><u>QUIZ #5</u></p> <p>Readings Due for This Class: Royse et al. Chapter 8</p> <p>Recommended Readings: Rubin & Babbie (2016) Chapters 10-11</p> <p>In class team exercise to be completed as HOMEWORK due before next week</p>
October 20	<p>Discussion of completed sampling homework</p> <p>Evaluating program outcome and efficiency</p> <p>Readings Due For These Classes: Royse et al. Chapters 9 & 10</p> <p>Recommended Reading: Rubin & Babbie (2016) Chapter 12</p>
October 27	<p>Evaluating program outcome and efficiency (Continued)</p> <p><u>QUIZ #6</u></p> <p>Readings Due For These Classes: Royse et al. Chapters 9 & 10</p> <p>Recommended Reading: Rubin & Babbie (2016) Chapter 12</p>
November 3	<p>Single-system designs for evaluating practice outcome</p> <p><u>QUIZ #7</u></p> <p>Readings Due For This Class: Royse et al. Chapter 6</p> <p>Recommended Readings: Rubin & Babbie (2016) Chapter 13</p>
November 10	<p>Descriptive data analysis & presentation</p> <p><u>QUIZ #8</u></p> <p>Readings Due For This Class: Rubin, A. (2013). <i>Statistics for evidence-based practice and evaluation</i>, 3rd Edition. Chapters 5, 6, & 7</p>

November 17	Inferential data analysis in evaluating program outcome <u>QUIZ #9</u> Readings Due For This Class: 1) Rubin & Bellamy (2012): pages 83-88; 192-204 and Appendix B
November 24	Pragmatic & Political Issues; Effect size benchmarks <u>QUIZ #10</u> Readings Due For This Class: Royse et al. Chapter 13 Recommended Readings: 1) Rubin (2014), An alternative paradigm for social workers seeking to do intervention research. <i>Social Work Research & Abstracts</i> 2) Rubin (2014), Bridging the gap between research-supported interventions and everyday social work practice. <i>Social Work</i> 3) Rubin, A., Washburn, M., & C. Schieszler (in press). TFCBT benchmarks study
December 1	<u>EXAM 2</u>

XI. Americans with Disabilities Statement

Whenever possible, and in accordance with 504/ADA guidelines, the University of Houston will attempt to provide reasonable academic accommodations to students who request and require them. Please call 713-743-5400 for more assistance. Instructors may not provide accommodations without supporting documentation from the UH Center for Students with Disabilities.

XII. Addendum

HANDOUT FOR QUALITATIVE FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEWING EXERCISE

Break down into groups of about 8-9 students per group. One student in each group will conduct a qualitative focus group interview with the group about the strengths and weaknesses of the GCSW program and student needs for revisions. Another student will be the recorder for the group and should write down the main needs identified by the group. Each focus group interview should last approximately 50-60 minutes, followed by a discussion within each group lasting approximately 15-20 minutes regarding the strengths and limitations of the process. The recorder should write down the main strengths and limitations identified. After a 10-minute break the class will reconvene, and each recorder will summarize the main needs identified and the main process strengths and limitations identified.