

# Part 1: Course Information

## Instructor Information

**Instructor:** Robin Lin Miller, PhD  
**Office:** 132 Psychology **Office Hours:** By appointment (via Zoom)

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## Course Description

This course is intended to introduce students to the history, professional standards, and leading theories of program evaluation practice. Students will explore professional evaluators’ roles and the contexts in which program evaluation occurs.

**Course Site**

[https://D2L.msu.edu](https://angel.msu.edu)

To address questions about technical aspects of D2L, call the MSU help line:

**1-800-500-1554 or (517) 355-2345**

Help is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

## Textbooks & Course Materials

### Required Text and Readings

* Schwandt, T. A. (2015). *Evaluation foundations revisited: Cultivating a life of the mind for practice.* Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

The remaining required readings you will access electronically. These are listed in the weekly schedule in part 3 of this document. Most of these readings are available through the MSU library electronic collections free of cost. There is a small course-pack you must purchase that contains two readings. The estimated cost of the course-pack is $11.65. The instructions for purchasing the course-pack are in the “Introduction – Start Here” module in D2L.

**Recommended Text and Readings**

* Yarbrough, D. B., Shulha, L. M., Hopson, R. K., & Caruthers, F. A. (2011). *The program evaluation standards: A guide for evaluators and evaluation users* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Although this text is not required, I recommend you consider purchasing it. This book describes the existing standards for an evaluation’s quality endorsed by the Joint Committee on Program Evaluation and has been endorsed or adapted by leading voluntary organizations of evaluation professionals (VOPEs) around the world. Additional recommended readings are provided in the weekly course modules.

## Course Requirements

* A high-speed (broadband) internet connection
* Computer manufactured within the last four years
* Minimum screen resolution of 1024x768
* Access to Desire2Learn.

## Course Structure

This course will be delivered entirely online through the course management system, Desire2Learn. You will need your MSU NetID to login to the course from the Desire2Learn home page (http://D2L.msu.edu).

In Desire2Learn, you will access online lessons, course materials, and additional resources. Activities will consist of discussion forums, email, journaling, and web posting.

This course is built on a weekly framework**.** Excepting the first module, the course materials will open at ***11:59 p.m. Eastern Time each Friday*** for the next week. Assignments may be completed and submitted in advance of the day and time during the week they are due, however, ***all materials need to be posted by no later than 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time on the due date indicated in the course outline.*** For example, when a discussion or debate or web posting is assigned, your first post is typically due by 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time on the Tuesday of the relevant week. For discussions and debates, the due date on D2L applies to the deadline for an initial post. Essays and projects are typically due on Saturdays before the module closes. Weekly course folders will remain open throughout the semester.

## Technical Assistance

If you need technical assistance at any time during the course or to report a problem you can:

* Visit the [Distance Learning Services Support Site](http://www2.lib.msu.edu/about/dls/division-dls.jsp)
* Visit the [Desire2Learn Help Site](http://help.d2l.msu.edu/)

Making Contact with the Instructor

D2L has a Frequently Asked Questions discussion board. Please subscribe to the FAQ forum – you will get a notice whenever a new post is made. Students and instructors can respond to FAQ posts.

If you want to address me privately, email me via D2L. I will try to respond within 48 hours on **weekdays**, Monday through Friday, and by 5 p.m. Eastern Time on the Monday following a post made on the weekend**.** If travel, illness, or being in the field to do evaluation work is likely to affect my response times, I will notify all students through D2L. For example, I anticipate that during weeks where I have conference travel or all-day meetings out of town, I will be slower to respond than ordinary.

When you use email, be sure to USE D2L, NOT MSU MAIL to contact me. Go to the “Communication” tab and choose “Compose”. Make sure you send it to me and put “880” in the subject line of your email. Also, please note that if you email me with a question that should have been posted to the assignment or reading discussion forums, I will copy your question and my response to it to the appropriate forum.

Remember, if there is a technical problem with the online environment call the Help Desk at 1-800-500-1554 or (517) 355-2345. I recommend that you put these numbers in your cell phone or computer contact list just in case you cannot get into D2L.

**Learning Communities and “Netiquette”**Because our course is delivered entirely online and you will not have access to the ordinary social cues in face-to-face encounters to guide you in judging how others perceive you, writing in a respectful and civil manner is critical to our establishing a productive learning environment for everyone. It is also a core competency for an evaluator to develop! We are all responsible for creating an atmosphere of trust and respect and for thinking carefully about how easy it is for online communications to be misinterpreted. To see specific suggestions for online etiquette (often called Netiquette) read this posting by the American InterContinental University on etiquette for online students:

<http://www.aiuniv.edu/blog/january-2013/discussion-board-etiquette-for-online-students>

# Part 2: Course Objectives

## Learning Objectives

Upon completion of this course, you should be able to:

1. Explain what program evaluation is and what program evaluators do.
2. Identify how professional evaluation practice standards are used to determine the quality of an evaluation process and its products.
3. Describe the basic tenets and historical origins of select theories of program evaluation practice.
4. Compare and contrast theories of evaluation practice.
5. Identify how theories inform practice decisions and the implications of theoretical decisions.
6. Describe the role of research on evaluation for informing theory and practice.

You will meet the objectives listed above through a combination of the following activities in this course:

* Completing assigned readings.
* Composing essays, journal entries, and other written products.
* Participating in online discussions, activities, and projects.

Each unit of the course includes learning objectives, assigned readings, a journal entry, and narrated PowerPoint presentations of core concepts. In addition, the units include a mixture of essay writing, online discussions, debates and activities, and the development of bids for an evaluation contract (weeks 6-15). The bids will each be informed by a distinct theoretical approach to evaluation; each student will become our on-line learning community’s resident expert in that approach and, through developing their bid, help their fellow students to become familiar with the distinctive features of the approach.

## Core Competencies

This course supports the development of the following 2018 AEA Evaluator Competencies for program evaluators:

* *Competency 1.1 – Acts ethically through evaluation practice that demonstrates integrity and respects people from different cultural backgrounds and indigenous groups.*
* *Competency 1.2 – Applies the foundational documents adopted by the American Evaluation Association that ground evaluation practice.*
* *Competency 1.3 – Selects evaluation approaches and theories appropriately.*
* *Competency 1.5 – Reflects on evaluation formally or informally to improve practice.*
* *Competency 1.6 – Identifies personal areas of professional competence and needs for growth.*
* *Competency 1.8 – Identifies how evaluation practice can promote social justice and the public good.*
* *Competency 2.1 –Identifies evaluation purposes and needs.*
* *Competency 2.3 – Designs credible and feasible evaluations that address identified purposes and needs.*
* *Competency 2.4 –Determines and justifies appropriate methods to answer evaluation questions.*
* *Competency 2.5 – Identifies assumptions that underlie methodologies and program logic.*
* *Competency 3.1 – Responds respectfully to the uniqueness of the evaluation context.*
* *Competency 3.4 – Attends to the systems issues within the context.*
* *Competency 3.8 – Promotes evaluation use and influence in context.*
* *Competency 4.4 – Plans for evaluation use and influence.*
* *Competency 5.5 – Attends to the ways that power and privilege affect evaluation practice.*
* *Competency 5.7 – Facilitates constructive and culturally responsive interaction throughout the evaluation.*

# Part 3: Course Outline/Schedule

**Important Note:** Refer to the course calendar for specific meeting dates and times. I provide detailed explanations of activities and assignments in each week's corresponding learning module. Also, note that because I am aware of the amount of work that you will have to do on your own each week, I often provide you with a list of optional readings at the end of each lecture rather than require these readings of you. I encourage you to consider reading as much of the suggested material as you can, whether during or after the course, to increase your depth in program evaluation theory. In addition, as part of your work in this course, you will develop an annotated bibliography of one approach to evaluation so that you and your peers have a detailed reading list on that approach for future reference. Thus, although you will not read all that there is to read on the topics we cover, you will have a healthy starter list of readings for future exploration of these topics. If you have any questions, please contact your instructor via the discussion thread in the course introduction on readings and assignments. All assignments are due by 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time on the due date listed in D2L.

* **Week 01: History of Contemporary Program Evaluation Practice in the United States**

Schwandt, Prologue

Fitzpatrick, J. L., Sanders, J. R., & Worthen, B. R. (2010). Chapter 2 in *Program evaluation: Alternative approaches and practical guidelines* (4th edition). Boston: Allyn and Bacon. (This reading is available through the course pack.)

Mathison, S. (2008). What is the difference between evaluation and research and why do we care? In N. L. Smith & P. R. Brandon (Eds.), *Fundamental issues in evaluation* (pp. 183-196). (This reading is available through the course pack.)

* **Week 02: The Evaluator’s Role and Identity**

Schwandt, Chapter 1

Skolits, G. J., Morrow, J. A., & Burr, E. M. (2009). Re-conceptualizing evaluator roles. *American Journal of Evaluation*, *30*, 275-295. (This reading is available through the library’s electronic resources.)

* + **Week 03: Professional Standards of Practice in the United States**

Schwandt, Chapter 7

AEA Guiding Principles [AEA Guiding Principles 2018](https://www.eval.org/About/Guiding-Principles)

AEA Evaluator Competencies [AEA Evaluator Competencies](https://www.eval.org/Portals/0/Docs/AEA%20Evaluator%20Competencies.pdf?ver=BeHsAQf24ObQeMHbPAlf3Q%3d%3d)

AEA Statement on cultural competence [AEA Statement on Cultural Competence](https://www.eval.org/About/Competencies-Standards/Cutural-Competence-Statement)

Morris, M. (2011). The good, the bad, and the evaluator: 25 years of *AJE* ethics. *American Journal of Evaluation, 32*, 134-151. (This reading is available through the library’s electronic resources.)

* **Week 04: Standards for Judging an Evaluation’s Quality**

OECD DAC Standards for Development Evaluation [OECD DAC Standards for Development Evaluation](https://www.oecd.org/development/evaluation/qualitystandards.pdf)

Joint Committee Program Evaluation Standards Statements [JC Evaluation Standards](http://www.jcsee.org/program-evaluation-standards-statements)

Stufflebeam, D. L. (2001). The meta-evaluation imperative. *American Journal of Evaluation, 22*, 183-209. (This reading is available through the library’s electronic resources.)

* **Week 05: Evaluation Theories and Models**

Schwandt, Chapter 2

Shadish, W. R. (1998). Evaluation theory is who we are. *American Journal of Evaluation, 19*, 1-19. (This reading is available through the library’s electronic resources.)

Smith, N. L. (2010). Characterizing the evaluand in evaluating theory. *American Journal of Evaluation, 31*, 383-389. (This reading is available through the library’s electronic resources.)

Miller, R. L. (2010). Developing standards for empirical examinations of evaluation theory. *American Journal of Evaluation, 31,* 390-399*.* (This reading is available through the library’s electronic resources.)

* **Week 06: Valuing, Part I**

Schwandt, Chapter 3

Abma, T.A. & Greene, J.G. (2001). Stake’s responsive evaluation: Core ideas and evolution. *New Direction for Evaluation,* No. 92, 7-23. (This reading is available through the library’s electronic resources.)

Scriven, M. (1995). The logic of evaluation and evaluation practice. *New Direction for Evaluation,* No. 68, 49-70. (This reading is available through the library’s electronic resources.)

* **Week 07: Valuing, Part II**

Davidson, J. (2014). How “beauty” can bring truth and justice to life. In J. C. Griffith & B. Montrosse-Moorhead (Eds.), *Revisiting truth, beauty, and justice: Evaluating with validity in the 21st century*. New Directions for Evaluation, 142, 31-43. (This reading is available through the library’s electronic resources.)

Guba, E. G. (1987). What have we learned about constructivist evaluation? *American Journal of Evaluation, 8,* 23-43. (This reading is available through the library’s electronic resources.)

House, E. R. (1995). Putting things together coherently: Logic and justice. *New Direction for Evaluation,* No. 68, 33-48. (This reading is available through the library’s electronic resources.)

* **Week 08: Methods, Part I**

Schwandt, Chapter 4

Campbell, D.T. (1991). Methods for the experimenting society, reprinted in *American Journal of Evaluation (formerly Evaluation Practice), 12,* 223-260. (This reading is available through the library’s electronic resources.)

Julnes, G. J. & Mark, M. M. (1998). Evaluation as sensemaking: Knowledge construction in a realist world. *New Direction for Evaluation,* No. 78, 33-52. (This reading is available through the library’s electronic resources.)

Shaw, I. (2018). Lee Cronbach (1916-2001): A critical appreciation. *Qualitative Social Work, 17*, 152-163. (This reading is available through the library’s electronic resources.)

* **Week 09: Methods, Part II**

Schwandt, Chapter 5

Rallis, S. (2015). When and how qualitative methods provide credible and actionable evidence: Reasoning with rigor, probity, and transparency. In S.I. Donaldson, C. A. Christie, & M. M. Mark (Eds.), Credible and actionable evidence: The foundation for rigorous and influential evaluations. (pp. 137-155). Newbury Park, CA: Sage. (This reading is available through the library’s electronic resources through the following link: <http://ezproxy.msu.edu/login?url=http://dx.doi.org/10.4135/9781483385839.n10>)

Scriven. M. (2015). Demythologizing causation and evidence. In S.I. Donaldson, C. A. Christie, & M. M. Mark (Eds.), *Credible and actionable evidence: The foundation for rigorous and influential evaluations.* (pp. 115-132). Newbury Park, CA: Sage. This reading is available through the library’s electronic resources through the following link:

<http://ezproxy.msu.edu/login?url=http://dx.doi.org/10.4135/9781483385839.n8>)

Weiss, C. H. (1997). Theory-based evaluation: Past, present, future. *New Direction for Evaluation,* No. 76, 41-56. (This reading is available through the library’s electronic resources.)

* + **Week 10: Use, Part I**

Schwandt, Chapter 6

Alkin, M.C. & King, J. A. (2016). The historical development of evaluation use. *American Journal of Evaluation, 37*, 568-579. (This reading is available through the library’s electronic resources.)

Wholey, J. S. (2001). Managing for results: Roles for evaluators in a new management era. *American Journal of Evaluation, 22,* 343-347. (This reading is available through the library’s electronic resources.)

* **Week 11: Use, Part II**

Alkin, M. C. & King, J. A. (2017). Definitions of evaluation use and misuse, evaluation influence, and factors affecting use. *American Journal of Evaluation, 38*, 434-450. (This reading is available through the library’s electronic resources.)

Alkin, M. C. & King, J. A. (2019). The centrality of use: Theories of evaluation use and influence and thoughts on the first 50 years of use research. *American Journal of Evaluation, 40,* 431-458. (This reading is available through the library’s electronic resources.)

* **Week 12: Social Justice**

Hopson, R. J. (2014). Justice signposts in evaluation theory, practice, and policy. *New Directions for Evaluation, 142*, 83-94. (This reading is available through the library’s electronic resources.)

Kirkhart, K. E. (2010). Eyes on the prize: Multicultural validity and evaluation theory. *American Journal of Evaluation*, *31*, 400-413. (This reading is available through the library’s electronic resources.)

LaFrance, J., Nichols, R., & Kirkhart, K. E. (2012). Culture writes the script: On the centrality of context in indigenous evaluation.  *New Directions for Evaluation, 135*, 59-74. (This reading is available through the library’s electronic resources.)

Mertens, D. M. (2016). Assumptions at the philosophical and programmatic levels in evaluation. *Evaluation and Program Planning, 59*, 102-108. (This reading is available through the library’s electronic resources.)

Podems, D. R. (2010). Feminist evaluation and gender approaches: There’s a difference. *Journal of Multidisciplinary Evaluation, 6* (14), 1-17. (This open access publication is available at: <https://journals.sfu.ca/jmde/index.php/jmde_1/index>)

* **Week 13: Complexity**

Schwandt, Epilogue

Gates, E. F. (2016). Making sense of the emerging conversation in evaluation about systems thinking and complexity science. *Evaluation and Program Planning, 59,* 62-73. (This reading is available through the library’s electronic resources.)

Reynolds, M., Gates, E., Hummelbrunner, R., Marra, M., & Williams, B. (2016). Towards systemic evaluation. *Systems Research and Behavioral Science, 33*, 662-673. (This open access publication is available at: <https://oro.open.ac.uk/47426/1/%28Paper%29%20Towards%20Systemic%20Evaluation6%20FINAL.pdf>)

Thomas, V. G. & Parsons, B. A. (2016). Culturally responsive evaluation meets systems-oriented evaluation. *American Journal of Evaluation, 38*, 7-28.

* **Week 14: The Theory-Practice Relationship**

Chelimsky, E. (2012). Balancing evaluation theory and practice in the real world. *American Journal of Evaluation, 34,* 91-98. (This reading is available through the library’s electronic resources.)

Coryn, C. L. S., Noakes, L. A., Westine, C. D., & Schröter, D. C. (2011). A systematic review of theory-driven evaluation practice from 1990 to 2009. *American Journal of Evaluation, 32*, 199-226.

Miller, R. L., & Campbell, R. (2006). Taking stock of empowerment evaluation: An empirical review. *American Journal of Evaluation*, *27*, 296-319. (This reading is available through the library’s electronic resources.)

Patton, M. Q. (2016). What is essential in developmental evaluation? On integrity, fidelity, adultery, abstinence, impotence, long-term commitment, integrity, and sensitivity in implementing evaluation models. *American Journal of Evaluation, 37,* 250-265*.* (This reading is available through the library’s electronic resources.)

* **Week 15: Awarding the Contract**

Read your classmates’ proposals and watch their videos

# Part 4: Grading Policy

## Graded Course Activities

Students may earn up to a total of 540 points in the course. Completion of each course module’s assignments and activities is worth a maximum of 36 points. The number of points you may earn varies for each task assigned. Note that to earn a passing grade, you must complete assignments and participate in activities. Missed assignments and discussions will earn 0 points.

### Late Work Policy

I will grade late work per the grading rubric outlined for each assignment. Students will receive their earned grade MINUS one point for each 24-hour period after the assignment was due. That is, an assignment that would have earned 9 points had it been turned in on time, would receive 8 points if it were turned in fewer than 24 hours late. This is equivalent to earning a B rather than an A. All assignments are due on Eastern Time.

### Viewing Grades

Unless otherwise indicated by the instructor, you can expect grades for the assignments completed for each module to appear in the gradebook in D2L by Wednesday at 5 p.m. Eastern following the week that the assignments were due. If I expect a delay in completing grading or providing you with feedback, I will contact you to make you aware of the delay. Note that there are two settings in the D2L gradebook. During the semester, the view will be set so that you can see what your average grade is on completed work only. This view does not account for missing and future assignments. This is important for you to remember because you will not be able to see the impact of missed assignments on your grade.

## Grading Scale

Final grades are determined based on your mastery of the course materials, demonstration of required skills, and completeness of assignments. All of these components will contribute to the final grade, which I will determine by conventional standards set at the graduate level. These standards include intelligible prose that is virtually error free, depth of critical analysis, and demonstration of effort in completing assignments. In many assignments, I indicate a minimum page length to receive the lowest possible passing grade (e.g., the equivalent of D-level effort for a graduate student).

I will assign grades using the following grading scale:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 518 points and above | 4.0 | At expectation for a graduate student. |
| 489-517 points | 3.5 | Near expectation for a graduate student |
| 461-488 points | 3.0 | Below expectation for a graduate student (and passing) |
| 0-460 points | 2.5 | Failing |

# Part 5: Course Policies

## Participate

Students whose names do not appear on the official class list for this course may not participate in this class. Any student who fails to log in and completed assignments during the first two weeks, will be dropped from the course.

I expect you to participate in all online activities as listed on the course calendar. If you miss more than three consecutive weeks of class (i.e., you do not participate actively in class assignments or activities, and have not communicated with me), you will receive a failing grade of 0.0 in the course. Keep in mind that MSU policy requires that you have completed 6/7th (86%) of the course to be granted a temporary grade of Incomplete.

If you are going to be absent from class for a week (or more) and unable to complete an assignment on time, you must inform me in advance to be formally excused and still receive credit for the assignment. You must provide me with an explanation in writing at least 24 hours before the absence. I will not honor emails received later than this and will not accept your assignment.

If you have an emergency, you must contact me prior to the assignment due date to make alternative arrangements. Otherwise, you will receive a 0.0 for the missed assignment(s).

I will use your Participation in weekly online discussions and activities described in Desire2Learn to monitor your course participation.

## Complete Assignments

You will submit all assignments for this course electronically through D2L. You must submit assignments by the given deadline or special permission must be requested from me before the due date. I will not grant extensions beyond the next module except under extreme circumstances.

You must submit written assignments as double-spaced, word documents. Citations should follow the American Psychological Association’s referencing style.

You must complete all discussion assignments by the assignment due date and time. Late or missing discussion assignments will affect your grade. Late assignments will result in the loss of one point for each 24-hour period following the time and date on which they are due.

## Understand When You May Drop This Course

It is your responsibility to understand when you need to consider un-enrolling from a course. Refer to the [Michigan State University Office of the Registrar](http://www.reg.msu.edu/) for important dates and deadlines.

### Drops and Adds

The last day to add this course is the end of the first week of classes. You may find the last day to drop this course with a 100 percent refund and no grade reported online in the MSU Academic Calendar. The last day to drop this course with no refund and no grade reported are in the MSU Academic Calendar too. You should immediately make a copy of your amended schedule to verify you have added or dropped this course.

## Inform Your Instructor of Any Accommodations Needed

Michigan State University is committed to providing equal opportunity for participation in all programs, services, and activities. If you have a documented disability and verification from the [Resource Center for Persons with Disabilities](https://www.rcpd.msu.edu/) (RCPD), and wish to discuss academic accommodations, please contact your instructor as soon as possible. It is the student’s responsibility to provide documentation of disability to RCPD and meet with an RCPD specialist to request special accommodation before classes start.

Once your eligibility for an accommodation has been determined, RCPD will issue you a verified individual services accommodation (“VISA”) form. Please present this form to the instructor at the start of the term and/or two weeks prior to the accommodation date (test, project, etc). I will honor requests I receive after this date whenever possible.

You may contact RCPD by phone at (517) 884-7273 (884-RCPD), or [via their website](https://www.rcpd.msu.edu/) (<http://www.rcpd.msu.edu>). RCPD is located in 120 Bessey Hall, near the center of the Michigan State University campus, on the southwest corner of Farm Lane and Auditorium Road.

## Commit to Integrity

### Academic Honesty

Article 2.3.3 of the [Academic Freedom Report](http://splife.studentlife.msu.edu/academic-freedom-for-students-at-michigan-state-university) states that "The student shares with the faculty the responsibility for maintaining the integrity of scholarship, grades, and professional standards." In addition, the Psychology Department adheres to the policies on academic honesty as specified in General Student Regulations 1.0, Protection of Scholarship and Grades; the all-University Policy on Integrity of Scholarship and Grades; and Ordinance 17.00, Examinations. (See [Spartan Life: Student Handbook and Resource Guide](http://splife.studentlife.msu.edu/) and/or the [MSU Web site](http://www.msu.edu/): [www.msu.edu](http://www.msu.edu).)

Academic integrity is a minimal expectation of this course. I will not tolerate academic dishonesty in any form. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarizing, fabricating information or citations, facilitating acts of academic dishonesty by others, and submitting work of another person. I will report any student involved in academic dishonesty to the Office of Academic Affairs and the Office of Student Affairs and may issue a grade of 0.0 for the course.

Lectures and other course materials must remain the property of the Department of Psychology. You must not copy course materials from the internet for distribution to anyone who has not registered for this course. Online discussions and exercises are confidential and you should not discuss these with others who are not enrolled in the class.

It is important for each course participant to express his/her ideas and to respect all ideas offered in discussions and exercises.

You are to complete all assignments on your own, unless I instruct you to do otherwise. This includes weekly assignments. Any group projects that are required still require individual work as a minimal expectation.

### Plagiarism

Plagiarism means taking credit for someone else’s work or ideas by submitting a piece of work (for example, a paper, assignment, discussion post) which in part or in whole is not entirely your own work and without fully and accurately attributing those same portions to their correct source. This includes information taken from the Internet. It also includes paraphrasing what someone wrote or said without attribution.

Robin Lin Miller designed this course. She developed its activities, lectures, and other materials. You must give Dr. Miller appropriate credit in the form of a citation when you cite course lectures and material in assignment.

Unless otherwise authorized by me, I expect you to do original work on each assignment in each class. If you recycle your own course work from one class to another, you may face an allegation of academic dishonesty. If I believe you have committed an act of plagiarism, I may take appropriate action, which includes issuing a “penalty grade” for academic dishonesty. [Article 11](http://splife.studentlife.msu.edu/academic-freedom-for-students-at-michigan-state-university/article-11-definitions) of the Academic Freedom Report for Students at Michigan State University, or the “AFR,” defines a penalty grade as “a grade assigned by an instructor who believes a student to have committed academic dishonesty. . . .” A penalty grade can include, but is not limited to, a failing grade on the assignment or in the course.

For examples of what constitutes plagiarism, see:

* [Indiana University Writing Tutorial Services](http://www.indiana.edu/~wts/pamphlets/plagiarism.shtml)
* [Purdue Online Writing Lab](http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/589/01/)
* [University of Alberta Guide to Plagiarism](http://www.library.ualberta.ca/guides/plagiarism/)

**Note: The instructor reserves the right to make changes to the syllabus during the course of the semester.**