

Department of Psychology  
MA in Program Evaluation  
PSY888: Evaluation Management

Fall 2020 Course Syllabus

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**Note: The instructor reserves the right to make changes to this syllabus during the course of the semester. Changes will be announced in the course announcement area of D2L.**

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Department of Psychology  
PSY888: Evaluation Management

Part 1: Course Information

Instructor Information

Instructor: Melanie Hwalek, PhD

Office Hours: Online and by email, Monday-Friday, by appointment

Office Telephone: 313-715-2875

E-Mail: [Hwalek@d2l.msu.edu](mailto:Hwalek@d2l.msu.edu)

Course Description

*This course engages students in thinking and practicing what it takes to lead an evaluation from preparing the evaluation plan and budget to managing the evaluation team and stakeholders, and delivering results and promised products within a cost, timeline and agreed-upon expectations of quality. This course uses the concepts and best practice principles contained within the Project Management Institute's Project Management Book of Knowledge. Students will apply these concepts to the art of managing evaluations within a variety of work settings.*

Textbook & Course Materials

*Required Texts*

Axelrod, R. and Axelrod, E. (2014) *Let's Stop Meeting Like This: Tools to Save Time and Get More Done* San Francisco, CA: Berrett-Koehler Publishers, Inc.

Heagney, J. (2016) *Fundamentals of Project Management (Fifth Edition)* American Management Association

*Course Pack Articles*

PSY888 Electronic Course Pack. Available for purchase at:

<https://d2l.msu.edu/d2l/loginh/?target=%2fd2l%2fhome%2f1193342>

Course Infrastructure Requirements

- A high-speed (broadband) internet connection
- Computer manufactured within the last four years with videocam capability
- Minimum screen resolution of 1024x768
- Access to Desire2Learn
- Zoom technology downloaded to your computer
- Microsoft® Word and Excel

## Pre-Requisite Knowledge

This course focuses on the *management* of program evaluations. It assumes that students already know how to design a program evaluation (i.e., identify evaluation questions; create the research design; determine sampling, data collection and data analysis; and prepare reports).

## Course Structure

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

In D2L you will access online lessons, course materials, and additional resources. Activities will consist of lectures with Microsoft® PowerPoint visuals, discussion forums, Zoom presentations, practice exercises, and individual assignments. Students will be expected to create videos of themselves and upload them to D2L discussion forums.

There are five major **Units** in the course and each of them has a brief introduction. Each unit has a varying number of **Modules**. All modules will open when the unit opens, on a scheduled **Wednesday at 12:00 AM Eastern Time**. Each module has a brief introduction and then has four sub-modules: (1) Readings and Lectures, (2) Learning Activity, (3) Discussions, and (4) Assignment, as follows:

1. **Readings and Lectures** is the first sub-module each week. It outlines required readings, a weekly video lecture, and other resources that form the foundation of the week's work. Because the week's learning activity relates to these materials, please complete these first so you can have a clear understanding of the topic we are addressing.
2. **Learning Activity** is the second sub-module. It contains exercises and hands-on activities to consolidate the materials you have learned in the Readings and Lectures sub-module. Some of these activities aim to engage students with each other to form a learning community. Other activities are small thought experiments or initial steps that prepare you to complete the larger module assignment.
3. **Discussion** is the third sub-module. There are two types of topics in the discussion forum, and the discussions toggle between them. One topic relates to the concepts discussed that week. The second topic presents a case study that engages students in discussions about interpersonal aspects of evaluation management. The discussions are intended to let students pose questions to each other primarily and to the professor, to interpret and reflect on what you have learned from the readings and learning activity, and to share your thoughts and knowledge with your classmates. Because other students will learn from your contributions, the first posts in the discussion forums are due on Sunday of that week, no later than 11:55 pm.
4. **Assignment** is the fourth sub-module. It provides a description of the current assignment. There are 16 assignments to be submitted. Some assignments carry more weight than others; some take more effort than others. Due dates and related information are provided within each module.

All tasks associated with a specific week must be completed by the following **Tuesday evening at 11:55 Eastern Time**. The first post in each week's discussion forum must be made before Sunday 11:55 pm EST of that week. The modules will remain open throughout the semester. If you have any questions or experience any issues with access, please contact your professor.

## 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](#)
- Visit the [Desire2Learn Help Site](#)

## Part 2: Course Objectives

### Learning Objectives

This course is primarily practice focused. Upon completion of this course, you should be able to:

1. Assess how your own career aspirations fit within the various work settings of evaluation managers
2. Understand basic concepts of project management and apply them to the management of evaluation projects
3. Create a high-quality evaluation proposal for managing an evaluation including: study goals and design, Work Breakdown Structure, budget, schedule and critical path, communication plan, stakeholder engagement assessment, and risk assessment
4. Apply the control aspects of evaluation management such as assessing data collection, analysis and storage quality; preparing and negotiating contracts; and completing Institutional Review Board applications
5. Value the importance of relationships and of verbal and nonverbal communication both within the evaluation team and with project stakeholders
6. Design effective meeting strategies for all phases of an evaluation project
7. Effectively close out an evaluation project and manage the knowledge gained for use in subsequent evaluations
8. Identify appropriate project management software and their application to various evaluation management tasks

### Values

To achieve these objectives, students will demonstrate the following values:

- **Collaboration** – to participate in online discussions and share knowledge with others so that a learning community is created that benefits all students
- **Respect** – to work from a stance that recognizes differences in culture, world view and existing level of knowledge and experience and interact genuinely and respectfully with all fellow students
- **Responsibility** – to take the initiative, be timely in meeting commitments, and authentically engage with the discussions and prepare all work products with sufficient attention to quality and timeliness

## Core Competencies

This course will support the development of the following core competencies for program evaluators:

**Professional Domain:** Demonstrates integrity as an evaluator through ethical and culturally appropriate practice that respects all people. Reflects on personal evaluator competence, areas for growth, and implications for professional practice.

**Context Domain:** Describes the evaluand/program, including its basic purpose, components, and functioning. Determines evaluability of the evaluand/program. Identifies and understands the evaluation context. Respects and responds to the uniqueness of the evaluation context.

**Management Domain:** Determines a feasible scope of work and timeline for the evaluation. Identifies required resources for the evaluation. Knows how to secure/budget evaluation resources and justify costs. Uses technology appropriately to support and manage the evaluation. Communicates in timely and effective ways with appropriate people to keep the evaluation moving forward. Monitors evaluation progress, problem solves issues, and makes adjustments appropriately. Keeps appropriate records to document the evaluation process. Completes and delivers the evaluation on time with appropriate documentation.

**Interpersonal Domain:** Values and fosters positive interpersonal relations as foundational for effective evaluation practice. Uses appropriate social skills to enhance interaction for effective evaluation practice. Communicates in meaningful ways throughout the evaluation (written, verbal, visual, etc.).

## Part 3: Course Outline and Schedule

### Getting Started (September 2<sup>nd</sup> to September 6<sup>th</sup>)

The first few days allow you to get familiar with the course materials, structure, philosophy and assignments. You will also introduce yourself to your professor and classmates sharing thoughts about your interests and existing skills in evaluation management.

### Unit 1.0 Landscape of Evaluation Management (September 4<sup>th</sup> through September 15<sup>th</sup>)

This unit has two modules:

#### Module 1.1 The Field and the Terminology (September 4<sup>th</sup> through September 8<sup>th</sup>)

- Introduction to the field of project management
- Evaluation management as special application of project management
- Organizational contexts within with evaluation managers work

#### Module 1.2 On Being a Successful Evaluation Manager (September 9<sup>th</sup> through 15<sup>th</sup>)

- Deep investigation of research on verbal and nonverbal communication skills and their application to evaluation management

### Unit 2.0 Initiation (September 16<sup>th</sup> through October 13<sup>th</sup>)

This unit has four modules:

#### Module 2.1 Evaluation Proposal Writing: Part 1 – Deciding the RFP and creating your hypothetical evaluation team (September 16<sup>th</sup> through 22<sup>nd</sup>)

- Selection of personal evaluation project through the study of Requests for Proposals
- Exploration of how to create an evaluation team for your project

**Module 2.2 Evaluation Proposal Writing Part 2 – Program Evaluation Logic Model and the Complete Evaluation Plan** (September 23<sup>rd</sup> through 29<sup>th</sup>)

- Effectively responding to evaluation RFPs
- Project Charter/Evaluation Plan
- Program Evaluation Logic Model template

**Module 2.3 Stakeholder Management** (September 30<sup>th</sup> through October 6<sup>th</sup>)

- Evaluation *Live!* model
- Evaluation Advisory Groups
- Stakeholder Grids
- Stakeholder Engagement Assessment

**Module 2.4 The Evaluation Proposal Draft #1** (October 7<sup>th</sup> through October 13<sup>th</sup>)

- Draft #1 of an evaluation proposal based on selected RFP

**Unit 3.0 Planning** (October 14<sup>th</sup> through November 10<sup>th</sup>)

This unit has four modules:

**Module 3.1 Work Breakdown Structure** (October 14<sup>th</sup> through October 20<sup>th</sup>)

- Levels of work breakdown
- WBS principles and formats

**Module 3.2 Costing and Rescoping the Plan** (October 21<sup>st</sup> through October 27<sup>th</sup>)

- Estimating time on task
- Right fitting an evaluation for resources available

**Module 3.3 Scheduling** (October 28<sup>th</sup> through November 3<sup>rd</sup>)

- Estimating duration
- Creating Network Diagrams
- Identifying the critical path

**Module 3.4 Project Risk Assessment and Communication** (November 4<sup>th</sup> through 10<sup>th</sup>)

- Identifying and mitigating risk
- Designing a Risk Matrix and Communication Plan

**Unit 4.0 Executing and Controlling** (November 11<sup>th</sup> through December 8<sup>th</sup>)

This unit has four modules:

**Module 4.1 Quality Assurance** (November 11<sup>th</sup> through November 17<sup>th</sup>)

- Assessing the evaluation's capacity to produce defensible data
- Draft #2 of evaluation proposal with note to professor about changes

**Module 4.2 IRB Application** (November 18<sup>th</sup> through November 24<sup>th</sup>)

- Federal regulations governing human subjects protection
- Practice completing an application for IRB approval

**Module 4.3 Controlling Process and Change** (November 25<sup>th</sup> through December 1<sup>st</sup>)

- Technical and interpersonal aspects of control
- Writing evaluation project contracts

**Module 4.4 Some Project Management Software** (December 2<sup>nd</sup> through December 8<sup>th</sup>)

- Exploration of software for managing evaluation tasks

**Unit 5.0 Closing** (December 9<sup>th</sup> through 15<sup>th</sup>)

This unit has one module:

**Module 5.1 Technical and Interpersonal Closings**

- Tools for self reflection on evaluation management successes and failures
- Meeting Canoe structure for facilitating effective meetings
- Writing closure letters

## Part 4: Assignments and Grading Policy

There are a total of 16 assignments. The assignments build upon one another culminating in a high-quality evaluation proposal that can be a reference for future work. Note that more than one assignment are due at the same time during some weeks.

Graded Course Assignments (*See weekly modules for details.*)

List of Assignments	% of grade	Points
<p><b>Class Participation</b></p> <p>Due: Weekly (2 points per week)</p> <p>Through <b>participation in weekly forum discussions</b> you can earn two points per week for a total of 15 weeks. You are graded two points for your posts made in each week's discussion forum. Posts must be made <u>no later than Sunday 11:55 pm of each week</u>. In addition to your original post, you must respond twice to fellow students. Posts must show evidence of completion of reading assignments and learning activities, and must show relevance and clarity of your thoughts. Posts should stimulate thinking and discussion. Note that some posts are in video format. You are responsible for making sure that the videos are viewable by the instructor and the other students.</p>	15%	30
<p><b>Assignment 1: Description of the evaluation team for your selected RFP</b></p> <p>Due: September 22nd 2020 (11:55 pm EST)</p> <p>A brief description of each member of your proposed evaluation team including what expertise they will have and the roles they will play in your evaluation project.</p>	8%	15
<p><b>Assignment 2 PELM Guiding Questions</b></p> <p>Due: September 29th 2020 (11:55 pm EST)</p> <p>Thoughtfully completed Program Evaluation Logic Model Guiding Questions worksheet detailing all components of a complete evaluation proposal.</p>	8%	15
<p><b>Assignment 3 Stakeholder Grid</b></p> <p>Due: October 6th 2020 (11:55 pm EST)</p> <p>Completed Stakeholder Grid for your selected RFP.</p>	3%	5
<p><b>Assignment 4 Stakeholder Engagement Assessment Matrix</b></p> <p>Due: October 6th 2020 (11:55 pm EST)</p> <p>Completed Stakeholder Engagement Assessment Matrix for your selected RFP.</p>	3%	5
<p><b>Assignment 5 Proposal Draft #1</b></p> <p>Due: October 13th 2020 (11:5 pm EST)</p> <p>First draft of proposal responding to selected RFP without the budget or timeline/schedule.</p>	8%	15
<p><b>Assignment 6 Work Breakdown Structure/Responsibility Chart</b></p> <p>Due: October 20th 2020 (11:55 pm EST)</p> <p>Completed draft #1 of WBS for your RFP of at least two levels and noting team responsibilities.</p>	5%	10
<p><b>Assignment 7 Task/Person Budget Worksheet Draft #1</b></p> <p>Due: October 27th 2020 (11:55 pm EST)</p> <p>Completed draft #1 of Task/Person Budget Worksheet (Excel file) for selected RFP.</p>	8%	15
<p><b>Assignment 8 Network Diagram</b></p> <p>Due: November 3rd 2020 (11:55 pm EST)</p> <p>Completed Network Diagram for your selected RFP including calculations of critical path.</p>	8%	15

List of Assignments	% of grade	Points
<b>Assignment 9 Risk Matrix</b> Due: November 10th 2020 (11:55 pm EST) Completed Risk Matrix for your selected RFP.	3%	5
<b>Assignment 10 Communication Plan</b> Due: November 10th 2020 (11:55 pm EST) Completed Communication Plan for your selected RFP.	3%	5
<b>Assignment 11 Proposal Draft #2 with Note to Professor</b> Due: November 17th 2020 (11:55 pm EST) Completed Draft #2 of proposal including budget and timeline including a note to professor regarding what has changed since draft #1.	10%	20
<b>Assignment 12 IRB Application</b> Due: November 24th 2020 (11:55 pm EST) Complete set of IRB forms for your selected RFP.	5%	10
<b>Assignment 13 Controlling Process and Change: Two Contracts</b> Due: December 1st 2020 (11:55 pm EST) Completed contracts: for one team member and for the funder/stakeholders for your selected RFP.	5%	10
<b>Assignment 14 Final Proposal</b> Due: December 8th 2020 (11:55 pm EST) Final proposal submitted for your selected RFP.	8%	15
<b>Assignment 15 Closing</b> Due: December 15th 2020 (11:55 EST) Completed closure letter for your selected RFP.	3%	5
<b>Assignment 16 PSY 888 Fall 2018 Evaluation Survey</b> Due: December 15th 2020 (11:55 EST) Evidence of starting the PSY 888 course evaluation survey (this is different from the standard course survey from MSU administration which you are also asked to complete).	3%	5
<b>TOTAL</b>	100%	200

### Grading Scale and Expectations

Final grades are determined based on your mastery of course materials, your demonstration of required skills, and your completion of course assignments. All of these components will contribute to the final grade, which will be determined by professional standards at the graduate level. You can view total points earned at any given point in the semester via the gradebook in D2L.

Grade	Percentage	Expectations
4.0	90-100%	The student demonstrates excellent orientation to the materials; incorporates an extensive knowledge base, reflection, and skills in all areas; shows an ability to integrate all concepts into practical situations.
3.5	85-89%	The student demonstrates good evidence of orientation to the materials; incorporates the key knowledge base, reflection, and skills in most areas; shows an ability to integrate almost all of the concepts into practical situations.



Grade	Percentage	Expectations
3.0	80-84%	The student demonstrates adequate evidence of orientation to the materials; incorporates most of the knowledge base, reflection, and skills in most areas; shows an ability to integrate the majority of concepts into practical situations.
2.5	75-79%	The student demonstrates some evidence of orientation to the materials; incorporates some of the knowledge base, reflection, and skills in some areas; shows an ability to integrate some of the concepts into practical situations.
2.0	70-74%	The student demonstrates some evidence of orientation to the materials; incorporates a little of the knowledge base, reflection, and skills in some areas; shows a limited ability to integrate concepts into practical situations.
1.5	65-69%	The student demonstrates some evidence of orientation to the materials; is limited in ability to incorporate the knowledge base, reflection and skills in most areas; shows a limited or no ability to integrate concepts into practical situations.
1.0	60-64%	The student demonstrates little or no evidence of orientation to the materials; has little or no ability to incorporate the knowledge base, reflection and skills in most areas; shows a limited or no ability to integrate concepts into practical situations.
0.0	Less than 60%	The student demonstrates no evidence of orientation to the materials; has little or no ability to incorporate the knowledge base, reflection and skills in most areas; shows no ability to integrate concepts into practical situations.

## Part 5: Course Policies

### Participate

Students whose names do not appear on the official class list for this course may not participate with this class. Students who fail to log-in during the first two weeks will be dropped from the course.

You are expected to participate in all online activities as listed on the course calendar. If you miss more than three consecutive weeks of class, i.e. do not participate actively in class assignments or activities, and have not communicated to the instructor to be excused from class, you will receive a failing grade of 0.0 in the course.

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 the instructor in advance to be formally excused and still receive credit for the assignment. You must provide the instructor with an explanation in writing at least 24 hours before the absence. Emails received later than this will not be honored and your assignment will not be accepted.

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

### Complete Assignments

All assignments for this course will be submitted electronically through Desire2Learn unless otherwise instructed. Assignments must be submitted by the given deadline or special permission must be requested from the instructor before the due date. Extensions will not be given beyond the next assignment except under extreme circumstances.

All discussion assignments must be completed by the assignment due date and time. Late or missing discussion assignments will affect your grade.

## 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 for important dates and deadlines.

### *Drops and Adds*

The last day to add this course is the end of the first week of classes. The last day to drop this course with a 100% refund and no grade reported is September 28, 2020 at 8:00 pm EST. The last day to drop this course with no refund and no grade is October 21, 2020 at 8:00 pm EST. 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 (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 accommodations before classes start. Once your eligibility for an accommodation has been determined, you will be issued a verified individual services accommodation (VISA) form. Please present this form to the instructor at the start of the term.

RCPD may be contacted by phone at (517) 884-7273 (884-RCPD), or via their website (<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.

## Commitment to Integrity

### *Academic Honesty*

Article 2.3.3 of the Academic Freedom Report 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 the 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 [www.msu.edu/Students/Student Life/Student Handbook](http://www.msu.edu/Students/Student Life/Student Handbook), or go to:

<https://trustees.msu.edu/bylaws-ordinances-policies/ordinances/ordinance-17.00.html>

Academic integrity is a minimal expectation of this course. Academic dishonesty in any form will not be tolerated. 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. Any student involved in academic dishonesty will be reported to the Office of Academic Affairs and the Office of Student Affairs and a grade of 0.0 may be issued for the course.

It is important for each course participant to express his/her ideas. All ideas need to be respected in discussions and exercises.

All assignments are to be done on your own, without assistance of additional materials, i.e. internet texts, articles, other people, etc., unless you are instructed to do otherwise. This includes weekly assignments and exams.

### *Plagiarism*

Plagiarism is taking credit for someone else's work or ideas, submitting a piece of work (for example an assignment or discussion post) which in part or in whole is not entirely your own work without fully and accurately attributing those same portions to their correct source. This includes information taken from the internet.

Unless authorized by your instructor, you are expected to do your own work, 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 your instructor believes you have committed an act of plagiarism, s/he may take appropriate action, which includes issuing of a "penalty grade" for academic dishonesty. Article 11 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: [Purdue Online Writing Lab](#).

### *Evaluate the Course*

Michigan State University takes seriously the opinion of students in the evaluation of the effectiveness of instruction, and has implemented the SIRS (Student Instructional Rating System) process to gather student feedback. This course utilizes the online SIRS system, and you will receive an e-mail sometime during the last two weeks of class asking you to fill out a SIRS at your convenience. As a reminder to be sure to fill out the SIRS evaluation form, the final grade for this course will not be accessible on STUINFO during the week following the submission of grades for this course unless the SIRS online form has been filled out. You have the option on the online SIRS form to decline to participate in the evaluation of the course – we hope, however, that you will be willing to give us your frank and constructive feedback so that we may instruct students even better in the future.

The course assignments also include an evaluation survey specific to PSY 888. Please be open and honest in your feedback. The rating and comments you give will not affect the points you receive for this assignment. You may leave the questions blank if you wish, but I hope you will be willing to give me your frank and constructive feedback so I can continue to improve this course in the future.

### *Ownership*

Lectures and other course materials must remain the property of the Department of Psychology and must not be copied from the internet for distribution to anyone who is not registered for this course. Online discussions are confidential and should not be discussed with others who are not enrolled in the class.