

Department of Psychology
MA in Program Evaluation
PSY888: Evaluation Management

Fall 2017 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.

Department of Psychology
MA in Program Evaluation
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Part 1: Course Information

Instructor Information

Instructor: Melanie Hwalek, PhD
Office Hours: Online and by email, Monday-Friday, weekly
Office Telephone: 313-715-2875
E-Mail: 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, facilitating use along the way, and delivering results and promised products within a budget, 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.

Hargie, O. (2006) *The Handbook of Communication Skills (Third Edition)* New York: Routledge .

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

Course Pack Articles

PSY888 Electronic Course Pack. Available for purchase at:

<https://caps.itservices.msu.edu/roundabout/f9cce44c-247d-4117-b8bb-7fcd0e36a4e3>

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
- Headset for video conferencing
- Zoom technology uploaded to your computer
- Microsoft® 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, individual and small group assignments.

There are five major **Units** in the course and each of them has a brief introduction. Each unit has a varying number of **Modules**. A new module opens every **Wednesday at 12:00 AM Eastern Time**. Each module also has a brief introduction and then has four sub-modules: (1) Readings and Lectures, (2) Learning Activity, (3) Discussion, 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. Some of them contain a few discussion questions about the module's topic. Others are intended to let students pose questions to each other primarily to gather information and help each other complete the assignments. These allow you to interpret and reflect on what you have learned from the readings and learning activity, and also provide an opportunity to share your thoughts and knowledge with your classmates. Because other students will learn from your contributions, the first post each week is due on Sunday of that week, at 11:55 pm.
4. **Assignment** is the fourth sub-module. It provides a description of the current assignment. There are 13 assignments to be submitted either individually or as a small team. 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 complete plan for managing an evaluation including: study goals and design, Work Breakdown Structure, budget, schedule and critical path, communication plan, and risk assessment
4. Apply the control aspects of evaluation management such as assessing data collection 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. 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 group activities in a timely manner 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 assume a sufficient share of the work load to assure that team projects are completed 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. Identifies and engages users/stakeholders when planning and conducting the evaluation. Considers broader contexts within which the evaluation takes place.

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.). Facilitates constructive interaction among those involved in the evaluation. Negotiates evaluation issues soundly and fairly. Addresses conflicts and disputes constructively in evaluation.

Part 3: Course Outline and Schedule

Getting Started (August 30th and 31st)

The first two 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 in evaluation management.

Unit 1.0 Landscape of Evaluation Management (September 1st through 12th)

This unit has two week-long modules:

Module 1.1 The Field and the Terminology (September 1st through 5th)

- 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 6th through 12th)

- Experimenting with verbal and nonverbal communication skills part one
- Mindfulness and management of self through the lens of the Integral Evaluator Model

Unit 2.0 Initiation (September 13th through October 10th)

This unit has four week-long modules:

Module 2.1 Mission, Vision, Goals and Objectives: Part 1 (September 13th through 19th)

- Effective meeting management through the Meeting Canoe
- Selection of class project and team through the study of Requests for Proposals

Module 2.2 Mission, Vision, Goals and Objectives: Part 2 (September 20th through 26th)

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

Module 2.3 Stakeholder Management (September 27th through October 3rd)

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

Module 2.4 Communication Part 2 (October 4th through 10th)

- Experimenting with verbal and nonverbal communication skills part two
- Application of Meeting Canoe to Evaluation Advisory Group meeting
- Communication plans

Unit 3.0 Planning (October 11th through November 7th)

This unit has four week-long modules:

Module 3.1 Work Breakdown Structure (October 11th through 17th)

- Levels of work breakdown
- WBS principles and formats

Module 3.2 Costing and Rescoping the Plan (October 18th through 24th)

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

Module 3.3 Scheduling (October 25th through 31st)

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

Module 3.4 Project Risk Management (November 1st through 7th)

- Identifying and mitigating risk
- Designing a Risk Matrix and Risk Register

Unit 4.0 Executing and Controlling (November 8th through December 5th)

This unit has four week-long modules:

Module 4.1 Quality Assurance (November 8th through 14th)

- Assessing the evaluation's capacity to produce defensible data
- Creating a Project Control Plan

Module 4.2 IRB Application (November 15th through 21st)

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

Module 4.3 Controlling Process and Change (November 22nd through 28th)

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

Module 4.4 Keeping Track of Multiple Projects

- Exploration of software for managing evaluations

Unit 5.0 Closing (December 6th through 12th)

This unit has one week-long module:

Module 5.1 Technical and Interpersonal Closings

- Tools for self reflection on evaluation management successes and failures
- Writing closure letters

Part 4: Assignments and Grading Policy

Graded Course Assignments (See weekly modules for details.)

List of Assignments	% of grade	Points
Class Participation Due: Weekly (1 point per week) Participation in weekly forum discussions can earn you one point per week for a total of 15 weeks. You are graded on evidence of completion of relevant learning activity assignments, your contribution to the learning community, the relevance and clarity of your thoughts, and the initiative you take to stimulate thinking and discussion. At least three posts are expected per week, <u>the first post must be no later than Sunday 11:55 pm of each week</u> . Note that some posts are in video format.	15%	15
Assignment 1 Communication Skills Part 1 Video Due: September 12 th 2017 (11:55 pm EST) A video posting about what you learned from one of the nine essential communication skills and how you plan to experiment with one.	1%	1
Assignment 2 Minutes from RFP Selection Meeting Due: September 19 th 2017 (11:55 pm EST) Minutes from the meeting you had with your selected partner(s) that demonstrates you followed the Meeting Canoe principles.	2%	2
Assignment 3 Program Evaluation Logic Model Guiding Questions (team assignment) Due: September 26 th 2017 (11:55 pm EST) Completed PELM Guiding Questions worksheet for your selected RFP.	15%	15
Assignment 4 Stakeholder Grid Due: October 3 rd 2017 (11:55 pm EST) Completed Stakeholder Grid for your selected RFP.	1%	1
Assignment 5 Communication Plan (team assignment) Due: October 10 th (11:55 pm EST) Completed Communication Plan for your selected RFP.	1%	1
Assignment 6 Work Breakdown Structure (team assignment) Due: October 17 th (11:55 pm EST) Completed draft #1 of WBS for your selected RFP.	15%	15
Assignment 7 TaskxPerson Budget Worksheet (team assignment) Due: October 24 th (11:55 pm EST) Completed draft #1 of TaskxPerson Budget Worksheet (Excel file) for your selectee RFP.	15%	15
Assignment 8 Network Diagram Due: October 31 st (11:55 pm EST) Completed Network Diagram for your selected RFP including calculations of critical path.	15%	15
Assignment 9 Risk Matrix and Risk Register (team assignment) Due: November 7 th (11:55 pm EST) Completed Risk Matrix and Risk Register for your selected RFP.	1%	1
Assignment 10 Project Quality (team assignment) Due: November 14 th (11:55 pm EST) Completed Organizational Capacity to Produce Defensible Data Worksheet Applied to a Single Evaluation for your selected RFP.	1%	1
Assignment 11 IRB Application Due: November 22 nd (11:55 pm EST) Complete set of IRB forms for your selected RFP including the revised and final protocol.	15%	15

List of Assignments	% of grade	Points
Assignment 12 Controlling Process and Change Due: December 5 th (11:55 pm EST) <i>(Note: an extra week is given due to Thanksgiving holiday)</i> Completed contracts for one evaluation team member and for the funder/stakeholders for your selected RFP.	2%	2
Assignment 13 Closing Due: December 12 th (11:55 EST) Completed closure letter for your selected RFP.	1%	1
TOTAL	100%	100

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.
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 25, 2017 at 8:00 pm EST. The last day to drop this course with no refund and no grade is October 18, 2017 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 and/or two weeks prior to the accommodation date (test, project, etc.). Requests received after this date will be honored whenever possible.

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 Spartan Life: Student Handbook and Resource Guide and/or the MSU Web site: www.msu.edu.)

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. Any team projects that are required, still require individual work as a minimal expectation.

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:

- [Indiana University Writing Tutorial Services](#)
- [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 as 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.

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 and exercises are confidential and should not be discussed with others who are not enrolled in the class.